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ABSTRACT

Each year thousands of young people are killed and injured in alcohol-related crashes. In 1992, Join Together, convened a national policy panel on underage drinking in direct response to communities' demands for action. This document is a product of the panel's findings. Section 1, Recommendations to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol, made five recommendations: (1) It should be illegal for individuals under age 21 to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their bodies; (2) There should be a 5-cent per-drink increase on the current federal excise tax on all alcoholic beverages; (3) All retail outlets and private individuals should be held liable for negligently providing alcohol to a minor; (4) Each television, radio, and cable operator who runs advertisements promoting alcoholic beverages should be required to provide equal time for counter advertisements about the health risks associated with alcohol consumption; and (5) Local government officials and community coalitions around the country should systematically assess teen access to alcohol in their communities and examine ways to reduce this access. Section II, Action Steps for Your Community, covers building community support and strategies to reduce underage access to alcohol. Contains 75 references and lists of panel participants, general resources, and publications. (JBJ)

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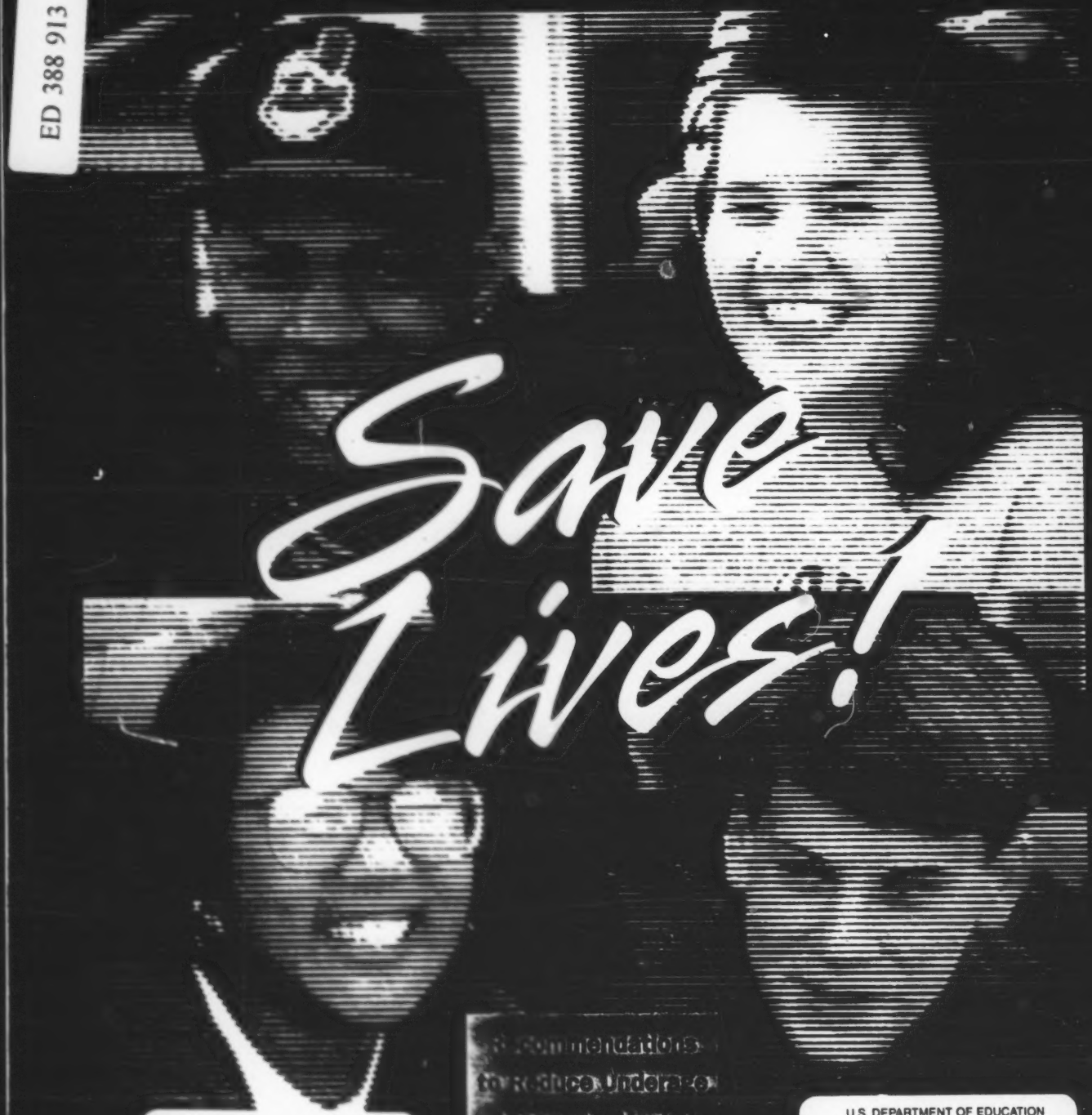

Save Lives!

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Foreword by Calvin Hill

Calvin Hill

Underage drinking is a major problem in communities across the country. Each year thousands of young people are killed and injured in alcohol-related crashes. And many of these lives *could* have been saved.

That's why in the fall of 1992, Join Together convened a national policy panel on underage drinking in direct response to communities' demands for action. Leaders in more than 1,500 communities throughout the nation told us in our 1992 survey that underage drinking and inadequate attention to alcohol policy were major impediments to their success.

The challenge we made to former Maine Governor Brennan, chair of the panel, as well as to the other members of this panel, was simple and direct: Review the consequences of underage drinking in our nation's communities. Study the constructive steps that have been taken around the country to address this problem. Listen to community leaders' requests and recommendations. Provide the nation with clear and concise recommendations for policies that will reduce underage drinking and save lives.

Since this report was originally issued in the Spring of 1993, many states have passed stricter laws to curb underage drinking. Other states have made enforcement of existing laws a higher priority, and President Clinton has called for national adoption of zero tolerance laws.

Much has been accomplished in a short time, yet there is much to be done to reduce underage drinking. Join Together has updated this report and community action guide with the hope that the pace of change will continue — and even accelerate.

The second part of this report provides suggestions to assist community groups in implementing the recommendations at the local level. The best thanks to the panel will be the rapid adoption of these recommendations throughout the nation. We urge national and community leaders to unite in pressing for the policies recommended by this panel.

Calvin Hill

Calvin Hill
Chairman
National Advisory Committee

UPDATE
1995

Save Lives!

Recommendations to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol & Action Steps for Your Community

JOIN TOGETHER
A NATIONAL RESOURCE FOR COMMUNITIES FIGHTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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Chairman's Introduction

Every day, young Americans die or have their lives ruined because of alcohol — *despite the fact that it's illegal to sell alcohol to minors in all 50 states.* Every single year, at least 6,000 young people die from alcohol-related car crashes, murders and suicides in this nation. We all know that many of these deaths are clearly preventable. As Governor of Maine from 1979 through 1987, I saw these senseless tragedies repeatedly rob families of their loved ones and knew that we must act as a state and as a nation to prevent underage drinking.

Young people face enormous social pressures to drink alcohol, both from their peers and from constant exposure to advertising that promotes alcohol consumption.

We send very mixed messages to young people by our inconsistent laws and erratic enforcement. Compounding the problem are many loopholes in the age 21 legislation. Many states do not prohibit adults from serving alcohol to minors or prohibit minors from drinking. And many states don't have a lower legal blood alcohol content (BAC) for drivers under age 21.

In 1983, during my term as governor, Maine was the first state to lower the legal blood alcohol content to .02 percent for drivers under 21. The result has been a sharp decline over the past decade in alcohol-related car crashes involving youth. If we can be more effective in reducing underage drinking across the nation, experts tell us that we can cut the alcohol-related death rate from automobile crashes involving young people by thirty-five percent.

When this panel convened in August, 1992, we were determined to help communities and policy makers reduce underage drinking.

Since we issued our report in 1993, communities across the country have been working to eliminate access to alcohol by young people. Youth are working with adults to save lives through changes in traffic laws, serving and licensing regulations, and — most importantly — attitudes about underage drinking.

We have also been pleased to see communities holding local policy panels on alcohol and youth. Panels have been held in several states including California, Massachusetts and Ohio. On behalf of the panel, congratulations to all the young people and their parents, teachers, public officials, public safety officers, media, responsible members of the hospitality industry, and all others who are working in their communities to implement the spirit of these recommendations. Your initiatives are important.

We still have much work ahead of us. But the very real strength of these recommendations is their call for all of us to work together, and the reward — preserving the lives of our loved ones — is equally real and precious.

Joseph E. Brennan

Joseph E. Brennan
Chairman
Join Together National Policy Panel
on Underage Drinking

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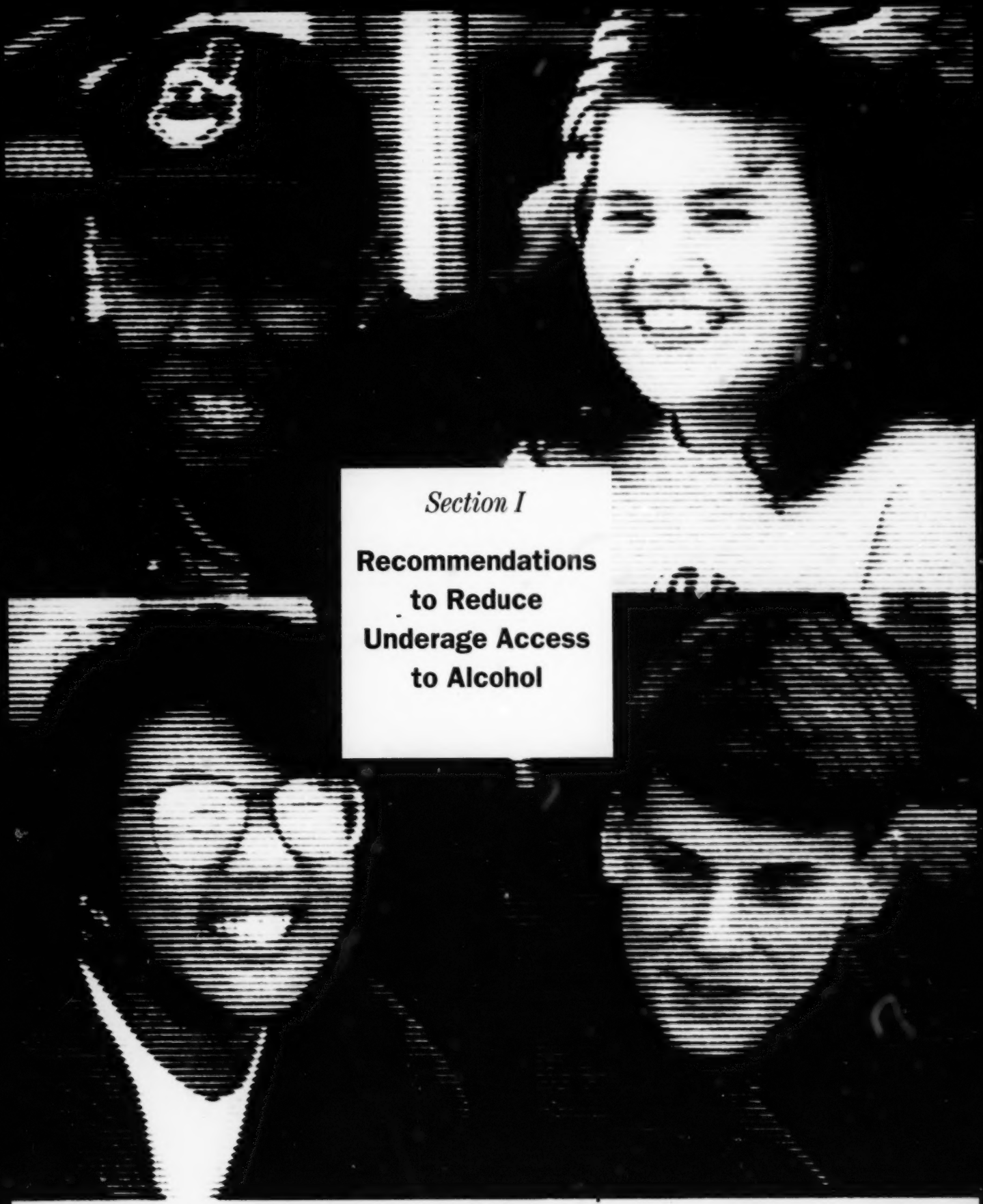

Section I

Recommendations to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol

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Background

WHY THE ISSUE OF UNDERAGE ACCESS TO ALCOHOL IS IMPORTANT TO COMMUNITIES

PROBLEMS POSED BY UNDERAGE ACCESS TO ALCOHOL

Teenage Drinking Patterns

Despite a legal alcohol purchase age of 21 in all 50 states, many teenagers continue to drink. Drinking to get drunk—five or more drinks at one sitting—is actually increasing in some places. According to a national survey of high school seniors, 90 percent of them had consumed alcohol, 30 percent within the past 2 weeks.[1] In a 1993 Massachusetts statewide survey of 16 to 19-year-olds, 80 percent said they drank alcohol in the past year, while over 20 percent said they typically consumed 5 or more drinks on each drinking occasion. This is up from a 1987 survey.[2]

Factors Encouraging Underage Access to Alcohol

Adolescents face enormous social pressures to drink, not only from their peers, but also from the media. The alcohol industry spends over $2 billion dollars per year in advertising and promotion. One major brewer spends more money each year promoting its brands of beer than the entire amount budgeted for the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse.[3] Alcohol advertising glamorizes alcohol, associating it with success, sophistication, athletic ability and sex.[4]

Whether or not alcohol advertising and television programming are intentionally aimed at youth, young people are continually bombarded with visual images that tell them alcohol, especially beer, is an essential component of a good life. There is almost no information presented about the negative effects of alcohol to balance the pro-alcohol messages they are exposed to.

The fact is that alcohol is cheap and it is not difficult for adolescents to obtain. One six-pack of beer costs about $5 and contains more than enough alcohol to make the average 18-year-old legally intoxicated. Many adolescents get alcohol at home, or have someone of legal purchase age buy it for them. However, two-thirds of those who say they personally tried to purchase alcohol were rarely or never asked for age identification.[5]

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety asked teenagers to attempt to purchase alcohol in New York and Washington, D.C. In New York, 50 percent of the youth who attempted to purchase alcohol were successful, and in the nation's capital, 97 out of 100 attempts resulted in successful purchase.[6] According to the Monitoring the Future study, 74 percent of 8th graders and 89 percent of 10th graders report that it is fairly easy for them to obtain alcohol when they want it.[7] Almost two-thirds of 7th to 12th graders say they buy alcohol themselves.[8]

Legislation at the state and local level doesn't help much either. There are numerous loopholes in state and local legislation regarding alcohol possession and consumption by teens. According to the Office of the Inspector General, Health and Human Services: 17 states do not have laws stating that consumption by minors is illegal[9]; 14 states do not have laws prohibiting minors from misrepresenting their age[9]; 11 states

do not have laws against minors presenting false identification[9]; and one state does not have any kind of law prohibiting adults from providing alcohol to minors.[9]

In addition to the legal loopholes, current laws are poorly enforced. Suspension and revocation of liquor licenses can be effective deterrents but these penalties are rarely applied.[10] Most states revoke licenses only in instances involving repeat violations, sales of illicit drugs or prostitution. In at least 10 states, vendors may pay increased fines in lieu of license suspension. In short, "21" is the law of the land but it is a law that is easy to subvert or to violate with impunity.[4]

Adverse Consequences of Teen Alcohol Use

Every year in the United States at least 6,000 young people die in an event linked to alcohol. Alcohol poses a major threat to the progress of young people (initial use of alcohol occurs at an early age; 11 years for boys and 12.7 for girls[11]) from adolescence to adulthood. Alcohol use is associated with all the leading causes of death among teenagers: traffic crashes, homicides and suicides. Alcohol is also a factor in unprotected sex resulting in unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. Its association with other drugs, psychiatric comorbidity, school dropout and academic failure all underscore the fact that underage access to alcohol is one of the most pressing health and social problems faced by our nation's youth.

Unintentional Injuries

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in the U.S. for people ages 6-32.[12] Though teenagers ages 17-23 comprise only 10 percent of the population, they were involved in 20 percent of traffic crashes nationwide in 1993.[13] In 1993, 40 percent, or 2,364 of the 5,905 traffic fatalities of people ages 15-20, were alcohol-related.[13]

Alcohol is also a factor in many other unintentional injuries, especially drownings and fires. Four hundred seventy four people ages 15-20 drowned in the U.S. in 1992, and 15 percent of these deaths were alcohol-related.[14] Alcohol has also been connected to 33 percent of drowning deaths for youth ages 15-20.[15] Alcohol has been linked to 25 percent of burn deaths in recent studies.[15] And 120 persons ages 15-20 died as a result of fires and burns in 1992.[14] A particularly common link is to smokers who, after drinking, fall asleep while holding a burning cigarette. Alcohol consumption may also make people less likely to hear smoke alarms and may disorient them, preventing escape from fire.

Intentional Injuries

Alcohol is also linked to intentional injuries, such as murder and suicide. Homicide is the second leading cause of death among young adults ages 15-34.[16] Each year more than 25,000 people die in the U.S. and 2.2 million suffer non-fatal injuries from intentional violence.[13,17] Seventeen percent of homicide victims are ages 15-20.[14] Of these homicides among young people, one recent review found alcohol to be a factor in 50 percent of them.

Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States with 30,484 deaths in 1992.[14,15] Eight percent of suicide deaths are among teens ages 15-20[16], and suicide rates among male teenagers have tripled in the last 30 years.[17] Alcohol use has been found to be a factor in 30 percent of suicides.[18] Adolescents who commit suicide with a gun are five times more likely to have been intoxicated.[19]

Sexual Risk Taking and Alcohol

The AIDS epidemic has focused national attention on the sexual behavior of the nation's youth. The proportion of teenagers who are sexually active has been increasing for two decades.[20]

Teens report that they are more likely to have sex if they, or someone they are interested in sexually, have been drinking. Moreover,16 percent of the 1,700 sampled are less likely to use condoms in sexual encounters that immediately follow drinking.[21] Heavy drinkers (5 or more drinks in a day) are also 2.8 times less likely to report regular condom use than nondrinkers.[21] The consequences of unprotected sex among teens are considerable. Unprotected sex results in over one million teenage pregnancies and over a half-million births to teenage mothers each year.[22] Many of these teenage mothers are unmarried and often do not have the social and financial support needed to raise a child. Fifty percent of children living in single parent households live below the poverty line.[23]

In addition to pregnancy, unprotected sex contributed to teenagers accounting for one quarter of sexually transmitted diseases. Three million teenagers — about 1 in 4 sexually experienced teenagers — acquire a sexually transmitted disease (STD) every year.[4] Besides the dangers posed directly by STD's, being infected increases the likelihood that someone can also become infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS. To date, over 441,000 persons in the U.S. have been diagnosed with AIDS.[24] One-fifth of those with the disease are age 16-29.[24] Given the long incubation period, many of these persons probably became infected during their teenage years.[20,24]

Use of Other Drugs with Alcohol

Alcohol is often a gateway drug for the use of other drugs. Adolescents who drink heavily are more likely to progress to polydrug abuse and to chronic alcoholism than are teens who do not drink.[25]

Alcoholism and alcohol abuse do not occur in isolation from other health problems. Data from the National Epidemiology Catchment Area Study of the U.S. adult population indicate that (excluding drug disorders) comorbidities occur in 37 percent of the alcohol abuse/dependent population. Frequently observed comorbidities include anxiety disorder (19%), anti-social personality (14%), affective disorders (13%), and schizophrenia (4%).[26]

A review by Zucker and Gomberg of longitudinal studies of adolescents that sought to identify factors associated with later alcoholism found that adolescent anti-social behavior, poor school performance, truancy, and school dropout were all independent risk factors for later onset of alcoholism.[27]

Teen Alcohol Use and School Performance

These latter findings are particularly important in light of a study which shows that students of given academic ability and family circumstances who report heavy drinking in high school are less likely than their peers to matriculate into and graduate from college. Students in states with higher beer taxes and higher minimum purchase age are more likely to complete college.[28] In other words, alcohol use during adolescence may contribute to poorer school performance, which in turn, may contribute to heavier drinking and ultimately to adult onset of alcoholism.

Effects of a Minimum Alcohol Purchase Age of 21

There is a precedent for believing that changes in policy can help to reduce underage drinking and its adverse health consequences. Raising the age of legal alcohol purchase to 21 has saved lives. Adopting new public policies to make these laws more effective will save even more lives.

In the 1970's many states lowered the legal drinking age from 21 to 18, 19 or 20.[29,30] Studies of states that lowered the legal age found significant increases in adolescent traffic crash involvement including alcohol-related crashes, total crash involvement, total fatal and single vehicle crash involvement compared with other age groups within those states. Research also showed that adolescent alcohol consumption increased in states that lowered the legal drinking age.[29,30]

By 1988, all states adopted a 21-year-old minimum alcohol purchase age, partly in response to federal incentive legislation. Numerous research studies indicate that raising the legal drinking age to 21 has reduced adolescent fatal traffic crash involvement.[31-39] The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration estimates that raising the legal drinking age to 21 has saved 14,816 lives from fatal traffic crashes; 9,995 within the last decade (1984-1994).[39] Raising the legal drinking age to 21 has also reduced alcohol use among people under age 21.[29] It also lowered levels of drinking among people in the 21-25 age group, who as teenagers lived in states with a legal drinking age of 21, compared to people in the same age group who as teenagers lived in states where the drinking age was lower than 21.[29]

Increasing the legal drinking age to 21 reduced six types of fatal injuries for young people in the United States between the ages of 15-24.[40] The higher legal drinking age reduced violence-related deaths among youth, particularly motor vehicle occupant and pedestrian deaths, as well as other unintentional injury deaths.

Recommendation

1

It should be illegal for individuals under age 21 to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their bodies.

- **Penalties for violation should include administrative driver's license suspension of at least six months, with no exemptions.**
- **A public information campaign should be launched to inform the general public about the law change. All driver's license applicants should also be provided with educational material about the zero tolerance level.**
- **The federal government should continue to provide states with incentives to encourage adoption of zero tolerance Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)* levels for youth and further consider withholding a fraction of federal highway funds from states that do not lower the legal BAC limit for young drivers.**
- **Law enforcement officials should use the most advanced technology to accurately detect a BAC level above .00 percent. They should be trained on how to properly use this equipment and how to accurately detect and measure BAC.**

***The Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) level measures the amount of alcohol a person has in his or her bloodstream. As a person consumes more alcohol, the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream increases. Adoption of this recommendation would mean that it is illegal for any person under 21 to drive after drinking any amount of alcohol.**

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

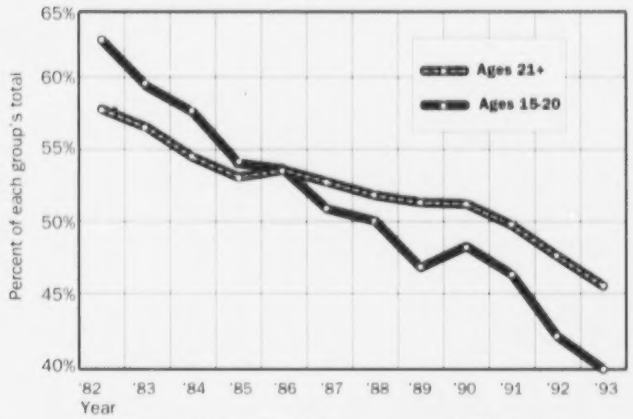
Adopting and enforcing appropriate standards will save lives.

Traffic deaths are the largest health problem directly attributable to teenage drinking. Alcohol-related traffic fatalities among youth ages 15-20 accounted for 2,364, or 40 percent, of all (5,905) traffic fatalities in that age group in 1993.[13]

Figure 1

Youth vs. Adult Motor Vehicle Fatalities

Alcohol-related percent of each total



SOURCE: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Alcohol and State Programs, "Youth Fatal Crash and Alcohol Facts, 1993"

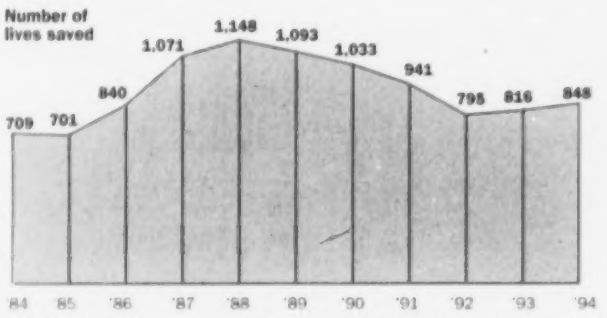
During the past decade, 2,000 laws have been passed nationwide to reduce drunk driving. This has resulted in a 34 percent decline in alcohol-related traffic deaths, from over 25,000 in 1982, to 16,589 in 1994.[19] The steepest decline was among youth, (age 15-20), down 44 percent, from 5,380 in 1982, to 2,364 in 1993. (Figure 1)

A major reason for the steep decline in teenage fatal traffic crashes was the adoption of age 21 by all states as the legal purchase age for alcohol.[37,38] The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 15,000 lives have been saved since 1975, and

that 9,995 fewer youth have died in alcohol-related traffic crashes over the last decade (1984-1994) as a result of raising the legal drinking age to 21.[39] (Figure 2)

Figure 2

Estimated Lives Saved by Minimum Drinking Age Laws



SOURCE: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) "Traffic Safety Facts — 1994"

Appropriate standards will help reduce the risks to the 25 percent of youth who drink to get drunk (more than five drinks at a single sitting), and who are at greater risk for fatal crashes and other bad health effects.

A comparison of Massachusetts teenagers who drive after consuming five or more drinks reveals that they are twice as likely to drive 20+ miles over the speed limit, run red lights, and make illegal turns. They are less likely to wear safety belts. They are three times more likely to have been ticketed for moving violations, twice as likely to have been involved in traffic crashes, and four times more likely to have been in a crash that resulted in injuries. (Table 1)

Inexperience in both driving and drinking places teenagers at a greater risk of being involved in a traffic crash for every drink consumed. On a miles driven basis, teens are four times as likely as adults to be involved in a fatal alcohol-related crash. Studies that compare alcohol breath tests given to drivers involved in single vehicle fatal crashes to alcohol breath tests given to drivers in roadside surveys who weren't involved in fatal crashes, show that with each .02 increase in BAC level, the risk of a fatal crash is doubled. Moreover, the risk of a fatal crash increases more with each drink consumed by drivers under the age of 21, than for each drink consumed by drivers over 21.[41] (Figure 3)

The 28 states that have adopted "zero tolerance" laws for drivers under 21 and the 7 states that have lowered the allowable BAC level for young drivers are saving lives.[42]

An analysis comparing the first 12 states to lower legal BAC limits with 12 states that did not lower the limits, found a one fifth decline in the proportion of fatal crashes that involved single vehicles at night in states adopting zero tolerance (0.00-0.02% legal BAC) legislation.[42]

These analyses reveal that the decline in night fatal crashes is significant in states adopting zero tolerance laws but lowering the BAC limit to 0.04 or 0.06 has little demonstrable effect.[43]

Table 1

Teen Driving Behaviors After 5+ Drinks*

Driving behavior after 5+ drinks in past month:	NO N=167	YES** N=67
Ran a red light in the past week	10%	27%
Made an illegal turn	26%	47%
Never wore a seat belt	26%	71%
Sped 20+ MPH over the limit	35%	86%
Past year tickets/ moving violation	20%	67%
Driver in a crash	19%	46%
Injury crash	4%	18%

* Massachusetts statewide random digit dial survey N=1010 licensed drivers age 16-19 - response rate 82%

** All differences between drivers who did and did not drive after 5+ drinks were significant p = .0001

SOURCE:
Boston University School of Public Health, Social and Behavioral Sciences Section, 1993 Massachusetts statewide survey data

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Table 2

States with Lower BAC's for Adolescents

State	Age	Legal BAC Limit
AR	<21	.02
AZ	<21	.00
CA	<21	.01
CT	<21	.02
DC	<21	.00
DE	<21	.02
GA	< 18	.04
ID	<21	.02
IL	< 21	.00
IO	<21	.02
LA	<18	.04
MA	<21	.02
MD	<21	.02
ME	<21	.02
MI	<21	.02
MN	<21	.00
MT	<21	.02
NC	<19	.00
NE	<21	.02
NH	< 21	.02
NJ	<21	.02
NM	<21	.02
OH	<21	.02
OK	<18	.02
OR	<21	.00
RI	<21	.02
SD	<21	.00
TN	<21	.02
TX	<21	.07
UT	<21	.00
VA	<21	.02
VT	<18	.02
WA	<21	.02
WI	<19	.00
WV	<21	.02

Grey=states with "zero tolerance" laws

SOURCE: National Transportation Safety Board "State Laws on Low BAC for Youth" May 1995.

Education and enforcement are critical to the success of lower BAC laws for youth.

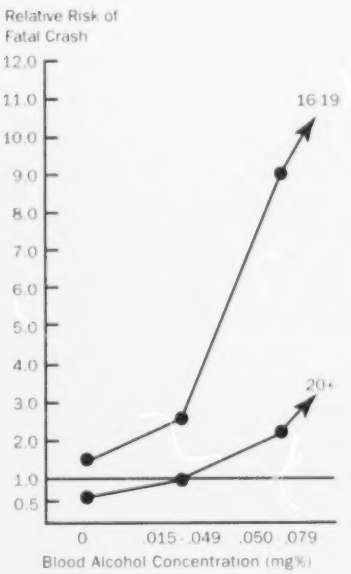
Currently, 27 states and the District of Columbia have passed zero tolerance laws for all drivers under 21. There are 7 other states with less stringent underage drinking laws for young drivers. (Table 2)

Clear and consistent messages are a critical part of changing behavior. An education program for the public and for law enforcement officials should accompany passage of a zero tolerance law to ensure that youth are aware of the law and the penalties for breaking it. In Maine, the first state to pass a .02 BAC law, a statewide survey conducted three years after the law was passed revealed that one-third of the 16 to 19-year-olds interviewed did not know it was illegal for them to drive after consuming only one drink, and 40 percent did not know their licenses could be suspended for doing so.[41] A study in Maryland has found that intensive educational programs can enhance the impact of lowering legal BAC limits.[42]

Figure 3

Relative Risk of a Fatal Crash

Drivers Ages 16-19 and 20+ as a Function of BAC



SOURCE: Simpson, H. (1989) MADD Youth Issues Compendium, Volume II

Young drivers in states with lower legal BAC limits report being stopped by the police after drinking, but not being requested to take a breath test.[43] Currently, nine of the 35 states that have lowered youth BAC limits have set the standard at .00. In each of these states, any measurable alcohol level beginning at either .005 percent or .01 percent is grounds for citation. If a law enforcement officer detects alcohol on a driver's breath, the offender is required to perform a sobriety check and/or take a preliminary breath test at the site of the arrest. Ultimately, a more sophisticated alcohol test is given at the police station, which is used as evidence in court against the offender. (Any instrument used to provide evidence of violation of the .00 BAC limit should meet federal and state standards. The penalty for refusing to take a BAC test should be equal to the penalty for failing a BAC test.)

If the lower legal BAC limits are to have the maximum effect, it is crucial that officers have access to the best technical equipment to detect alcohol consumption. The use of a passive alcohol sensor would be particularly helpful. The sensor is a device that resembles a flashlight, and when held close to a driver, can detect the presence of alcohol without the driver blowing directly into the sensor. The sensor can detect very low levels of consumption, which helps police establish probable cause of driving while impaired by alcohol. Sensor use also reduces the number of drivers asked to take sobriety tests who are not intoxicated, thereby cutting down on the unnecessary detainment of non-impaired drivers.[44]

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The law should call for licenses to be administratively suspended.

Administrative license suspension has been shown to be an effective alternative to criminal penalties. It also benefits the offender who avoids having a criminal offense listed on their record. Further, administrative loss of license can be implemented at the time of the violation and ensures that the penalty will be certain for all apprehended violators. Studies of drunk driving laws that target drivers of all ages indicate that administrative license suspensions result in greater declines in alcohol-related traffic deaths than do criminal penalties.[47]

Federal incentive legislation could influence states across the nation to lower legal BAC limits for youth. Similar legislation prompted states to raise the legal drinking age to 21.

In many states, it is possible for young people to drive to nearby states with less stringent laws or standards of enforcement. When this happens, the risks of drinking and driving are compounded. Varying laws and standards of enforcement send confusing messages to young people about what constitutes acceptable behavior. Setting and enforcing standard legal BAC limits will send a clear message that it is not acceptable to drive after drinking any amount of alcohol. The National Commission on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances approved a lower legal BAC for youth in the 1992 Uniform Vehicle Code.

The current trend in lower BAC laws is for states to adopt zero tolerance (0.00-0.02% legal BAC) laws for all drivers under 21. This means that it would be illegal for youth to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their system. One alcoholic beverage is sufficient to yield a 0.02% BAC reading on a breathalyzer test. Under zero tolerance laws, young people would be subjected to the same penalties that their states impose on adults convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol. President Clinton has started a national campaign to steer all states in this direction. He has urged the federal government to offer incentives or sanctions to encourage state compliance with a nationwide adoption of zero tolerance laws.

Recommendation

2

There should be a 5-cent per-drink increase on the current federal excise tax on all alcoholic beverages.

- **This tax should be indexed for future inflation.**
- **A portion of the revenues from this tax should be used for efforts to reduce alcohol use and also support state and/or municipal law enforcement sanctions targeted toward outlets that sell or serve alcoholic beverages to minors.**
- **Under existing law, the alcohol in beer or wine is taxed at a lower rate than the alcohol in other beverages. The approach recommended here would treat all forms of alcohol equally.**

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

Increasing alcohol taxes will save lives by reducing consumption, especially among youth who drink heavily.[48]

Coate and Grossman[49] used data from the second National Health and Nutrition Survey (conducted between 1976 and 1980) to study the effects of state excise taxes on beer consumption by youth ages 16 to 21. They found that when taxes on beer were increased, consumption decreased. They found this effect was stronger for frequent drinkers than for infrequent drinkers.

They also found that the effect of state excise taxes on youth beer consumption was as strong as or stronger than the effects of drinking age laws. These results suggest that the demand for alcohol by youth is more price sensitive than the demand by adults.

The works of Cook, Grossman and colleagues have consistently found that alcohol tax increases can reduce alcohol-related traffic fatalities. Cook found that a $1 increase in state excise tax on distilled spirits lowered both per capita consumption and cirrhosis death rates at the same time.[50] Grossman and colleagues conducted a 1991 simulated tax increase on beer. They found that had the 32-cent per-six-pack tax been present from 1982-1988, 671 fewer young people between the ages 18-20 would have died. They also found that had the beer tax been set at 81-cents per-six-pack during this period, 2,187 fewer young people would have died.[51]

Taxing alcohol is a traditional method for controlling consumption and for raising revenue in almost every country.

Failure to raise alcohol taxes in line with inflation has weakened the role of taxation as an alcohol control policy and contributed to the growth of the federal deficit.

During much of our history, alcohol taxes have provided a substantial portion of federal revenues. In 1910, about 80 percent of the government's income came from alcohol taxes. In 1941, alcohol taxes provided about 11 percent of the treasury's revenue. By 1994, alcohol taxes provided less than one half of one percent of federal revenue.

The real price of alcohol has declined over recent decades because the federal excise tax on alcohol has not kept pace with inflation.

As a result of the decline in the price of alcohol, it is almost as cheap for young people to drink beer and wine as it is to drink soft drinks. The federal excise taxes on beer and wine have been increased only once since 1951; a modest increase in the tax on distilled beverages was enacted in 1985, and again in 1990.[48] By 1992, the federal excise tax on beer had fallen to about 35 percent of its 1950 value. If these taxes had been indexed to consumer prices, the U.S. Treasury would have collected an additional $100 billion or more in revenue. The failure to adjust taxes for inflation has resulted in keeping the relative price of alcoholic beverages artificially low.[52] Phillip Cook, a leading economist and expert on alcohol abuse, has suggested that "it is safe to conclude that the sharp decline in alcohol prices (during the last 20 years) has exacerbated alcohol-related health problems."[53]

Increased alcohol taxes will help cover the societal costs of alcohol abuse and send a strong message, especially to youth, about the negative effects of alcohol abuse.

Currently, alcohol taxes do not cover the societal costs of drinking. Manning, et. al.[54] estimated the societal costs of smoking and drinking by calculating the impact of these behaviors on the costs of health insurance, pensions, disability insurance, group life insurance, fires, motor-vehicle crashes, and the criminal justice system. These investigators found that drinkers do not pay their way. They estimate that current excise taxes on alcohol cover only about half the societal costs drinkers impose on others.

A 5-cent-per-drink federal excise tax on alcohol would yield approximately $6 billion at 1991 consumption rates.*

Support for increasing taxes on alcohol is broad-based. The general public supports increased alcohol taxes as indicated by several polls conducted in recent years. A May 1993 Gallup poll found that 75 percent of respondents supported increasing the federal excise tax on liquor and cigarettes.[56] Another 1993 poll conducted by the *Wall Street Journal* and NBC News found that 87 percent of those surveyed favored a $.50 increase in the tax on a six-pack of beer to help fund health care reform.[57] A December 1992 article published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* summarized findings from several national polls and found that overall, 76 percent of the population supported increased taxes on alcohol and tobacco to fund a national health insurance plan.[54]

*To derive this estimate, we started with U.S. Department of Agriculture[55] consumption figures for beer, wine, and distilled spirits; to convert to drinks, we multiplied gallons by 128 to get ounces and divided by 12 for drinks of beer, 5 for drinks of wine, and one for drinks of distilled liquor. We then multiplied drinks by 5 cents, yielding a total estimated annual revenue of $5,924,545,280.

Recommendation

All retail outlets and private individuals should be held liable for negligently providing alcohol to a minor.

- **People who negligently provide alcohol to minors or intoxicated persons should be subject to civil liability for the damages that result if the minor is involved in a subsequent accident. A retailer or private individual who provides alcohol should not be considered negligent if, at the time of service, responsible service practices were being followed.**
- **Alcohol outlets that illegally sell to or serve underage youth should have their liquor licenses revoked or suspended.**
- **Minors also should bear responsibility for their actions in the area of underage drinking.**
- **There should be penalties for use of false IDs.**
- **There should be strict penalties for the manufacture of false IDs.**

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

Imposing civil liability will save lives by deterring retail alcohol servers from serving alcohol to people under 21.

Retailers need a clear, consistent message that it is illegal to serve alcohol to minors. The age 21 law is often poorly enforced because there are so few inspectors and because of ambiguous laws in many states. For example, in some states individuals can sue privately, while in other states they can not sue at all. Establishing standard civil liability legislation in all states that would allow individuals to sue retailers for damages incurred by intoxication will help to clarify and properly enforce the 21 legal drinking age. It would also provide incentive for alcohol retailers to adopt server intervention and management practices. Outlets that train employees and enforce standards will be in a better position to defend against civil action.

Imposing civil liability on individuals who provide alcohol to minors will save lives.

Many young people are served alcohol in private homes or obtain it by asking someone of legal age to buy it for them. The threat of civil liability will deter individuals from providing alcohol to minors.

Recommendation

4

Each television, radio, and cable operator who runs advertisements promoting alcoholic beverages should be required to provide equal time for counter advertisements about the health risks associated with alcohol consumption.

- **Air time for these counter advertisements should be paid for by the sponsors of the alcoholic beverage advertisements. A portion of the alcohol excise tax should be used for costs associated with producing the counter advertisements and buying air time.**
- **The FDA and other appropriate federal agencies should be in charge of developing and implementing these advertisements.**
- **Prominent warning labels about the risks of alcohol consumption should appear on all alcohol advertising.**

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

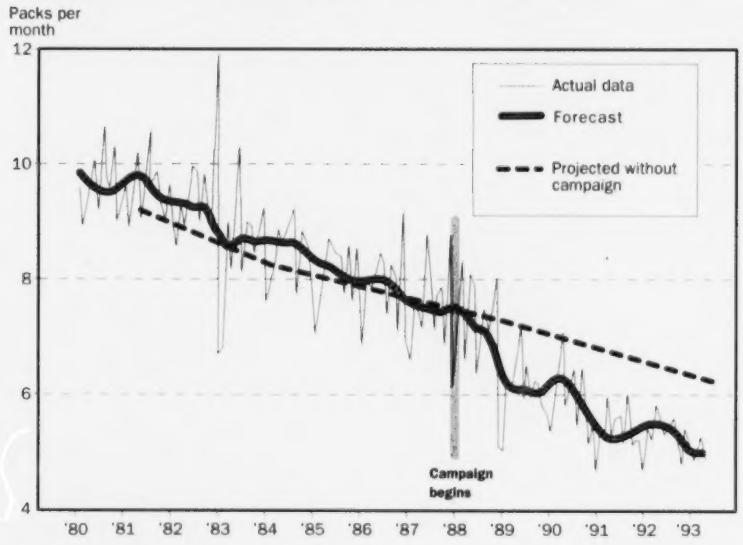
Counter advertising will save lives by providing children with a more balanced view of alcohol use by presenting the potential negative effects of alcohol consumption.

The majority of advertising messages youth receive today promote alcohol consumption by attributing "positive" benefits, such as social success, to consumption. The potential negative effects of alcohol consumption are rarely conveyed. Each year, the alcoholic beverage industry spends around $2 billion to promote their products; $643.7 million is spent for television advertising alone.[58] From 1976 to the mid 80's, beer advertising doubled.[59] While the alcohol industry has sponsored "moderation" and safe driving messages, these messages still promote alcohol consumption. Since 1986, however, spending for alcoholic-beverage advertising declined by 46.5%. Outlays dropped from $1.511 billion in 1986 (inflation adjusted dollars) to $808 million in 1993.[60]

Though there has been a decrease in the amount of alcohol advertising, many of the ads continue to target young people.[60] Children are continually exposed to messages in advertisements, movies, and television shows promoting alcohol use. Almost half of all alcohol advertisements are on television and in any given week, 92 percent of all children watch television.[61] In houses where both parents work, the time children spend watching television exceeds time spent with both parents combined.[62] From early childhood through high school, children spend more time watching television than any other single activity except sleeping.[61] Teenagers watch an average of 24 hours of television per week, about the same amount of time they spend in school.[61]

Figure 4

Per Capita Consumption of Cigarettes in California



SOURCE: California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section. ***Tobacco Use in California: An Evaluation of the Tobacco Control Program,*** 1989-1993. p. 42.

SOURCE: Projected line, Join Together.

Content analyses of prime time television shows document that two-thirds to three-quarters of all episodes show at least one drinking incident involving characters ordering, pouring, holding, sipping, or talking about alcohol.[51] Fictional characters in television drama, sitcoms, and movies drink 10 times as many alcoholic beverages as soft drinks, even though real life Americans consume twice as many soft drinks as alcoholic drinks.[52] On prime time shows, leading characters drink 74 percent of the time when they are in personal crisis.[53] Alcoholic beverage advertisers focus on promoting their products through association with desirable lifestyles.[61] One writer specializing in the psychology of advertising states that alcoholic beverage advertising "...isn't selling bottles, or glasses, or even liquor. It's selling fantasies."[62] Analyses of liquor ads show that the characters depicted tend to be youthful (but not underage) and display enjoyment (but not intoxication) in association with drinking. Among benefits frequently linked to alcohol products are social camaraderie, romance, masculinity/femininity, adventure, relaxation, and elegance.[63] Thus, alcoholic beverages are depicted as something of a magic elixir that can enhance social and physical pleasure, sexual performance and responsiveness, power and aggression, and social competence.[64] In fact, alcohol consumption slows reflexes, acts as a depressant and reduces sexual capacity.

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Counter advertising will reduce alcohol consumption among youth by contributing to a more realistic idea of both the benefits and the risks of drinking.

The members of the panel believe that most research suggests that advertising makes a modest contribution towards increasing consumption and has an impact in shaping how youth think about drinking and the consequences of alcohol use.[64] The way in which drinking is depicted in advertising and in the media in general may have important effects for how young people view alcohol; these perceptions may subsequently determine patterns of use as youngsters mature.

A recent study of 75 students ages 20 to 21 that appeared in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* suggests that alcohol warnings might have the long-term potential to influence beliefs regarding risks and benefits of alcohol use. Even among people who believe that alcohol use is low-risk, exposure to these warnings decreased the generally high levels of confidence that subjects had in their beliefs concerning risks associated with beer. Repeated exposure to warnings tended to decrease confidence in the belief that alcohol is beneficial.[73]

Another study also found that among teenagers and young adults, there was a positive association between exposure to television and magazine alcohol advertising and perceptions of drinking as attractive and rewarding.[65] A study of 450 10 to 13-year-old children found a significant correlation between exposure and attention to beer commercials, and higher expectation to drink as an adult.[66] Other studies have found that youth with more exposure to alcohol advertising were more likely to view drinkers as having positive attributes (e.g., happy, relaxed, fun loving, etc.).[67] Accordingly, the panel believes that if advertising induces favorable images of alcohol use among youth, it seems reasonable to conclude that counter advertising will moderate these images and could thereby reduce alcohol consumption.

Counter advertising will save lives by reducing underage drinking.

In California, cigarette counter advertising funded by increased tobacco taxes depicting the health risks associated with tobacco use has contributed to a significant decline in smoking.[71] (See Figure 4 on previous page.) Based on these results, there is reason to believe that running similar counter advertising about alcohol-related health risks will reduce underage drinking and save lives.

Revenues from alcohol excise taxes should be used to produce counter advertisements.

In order to effectively communicate the health risks posed by alcohol, counter advertisements should be of comparable production quality as advertisements used to promote alcohol consumption. The counter advertisements should also be aired at appropriate times, to ensure that they are seen by young people. We recommend that a portion of revenues from the proposed alcohol excise tax be used to produce these advertisements. We further recommend that the Food and Drug Administration supervise the production and broadcast of the advertisements, as it has jurisdiction over the health claims made in advertising.

Recommendation

5

Local government officials and community coalitions around the country should systematically assess youth access to alcohol in their communities and examine ways to reduce this access.

- **Young people should be involved in each step of the decision-making process.**

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

Research provides evidence that community-based interventions save lives.

In the past decade, community-based interventions and coalitions focusing on a variety of health issues have become widespread. Community-based initiatives have focused on reducing a variety of adverse health issues including cardiovascular disease,[67] traffic safety,[68] substance abuse[69] and teen pregnancy.[70]

Community-based coalitions, specifically focusing on reducing alcohol- and drug-related problems, have emerged throughout the country within the past decade. An estimated 2,500 of these community coalitions exist today.[71] The community coalitions are supported by diverse organizations. The federal government has funded several programs—the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Department of Education—to support the work of these coalitions. Private funding has come from fundraising and foundations, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Junior League, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, 4-H and religious groups.[71] These community-based coalitions have a variety of objectives and methods, but most include a focus on the prevention of youth alcohol-related problems.[71]

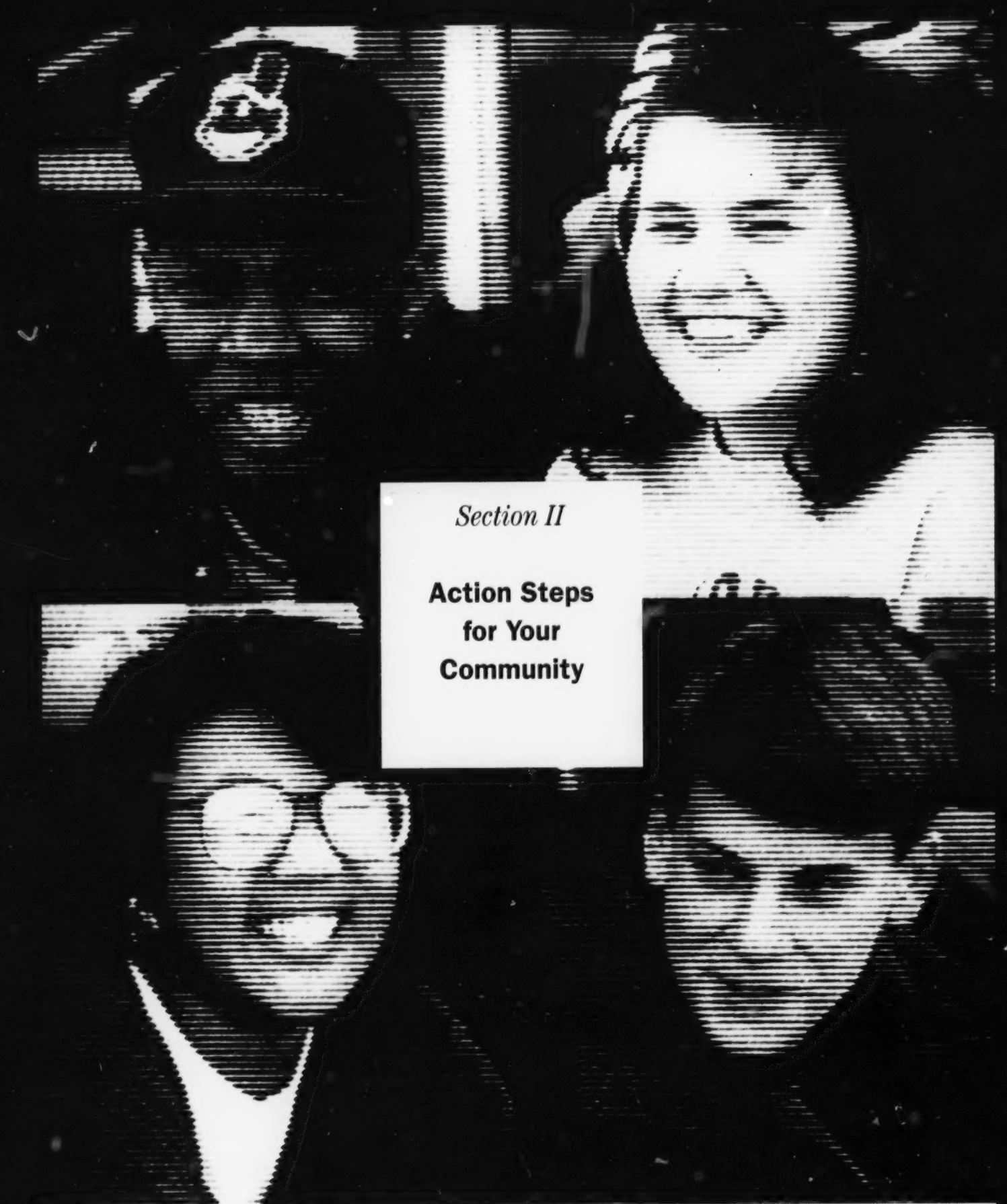
There are many effective strategies communities can use to reduce underage access to alcohol.

No single policy will meet the needs of all communities. The most effective approach will be a locally developed initiative, supported by the broad national policies called for in this report. The actual gap in policy and practice differs with each community. In some, liquor outlets may be willing to cooperate. In others, the schools may need to be cajoled. Parents may need special training or help. Suburban communities may need different approaches than rural communities.

Young people can help save their peers when involved in the decision-making process.

If young people are involved in developing strategies to reduce alcohol consumption among their peers, it is likely that these strategies and the messages that are developed will be more effective. This, in turn, may lower the resistance of some teens to measures designed to reduce their alcohol consumption. It is likely that young people are more familiar with the ways their peers circumvent laws than are most adults. They may also be better able to appreciate and articulate the pressures placed on them to drink. For these reasons, they may be able to more readily identify effective strategies for reducing underage drinking than can adults. During the 1980's, studies of school-based programs designed to reduce substance abuse found that programs that involved peer leaders often delayed substance use among adolescents more effectively than programs that relied solely on adult leaders.[72]

Examples of how communities are working to change local policies to reduce underage drinking are provided in Section II of this report.



Section II

Action Steps for Your Community

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Every year, at least 6,000 young people under the age of 21 die across this nation in alcohol-related incidents—traffic crashes, homicides, falls, burns, drownings, and suicides. The lives of thousands of other people are irreparably damaged from the abuse of alcohol. The power to stop this tragic waste is in the hands of people like you and your neighbors.

People united in coalitions across the country are changing laws, calling for stricter enforcement of existing laws, and getting youth involved in solutions to reduce the harm from underage drinking. They are restricting inner city billboard advertising, establishing keg registration in suburban towns and on college campuses, visiting schools to teach students about the potential health risks from drinking, and using the media to report and publicize the harms caused by underage drinking.

More than 2,500 broad-based coalitions are working in big cities, the suburbs, and rural communities. These coalitions include parents, youth, police, clergy, schools, and business leaders. In the 1993 Join Together National Survey, these community leaders told us that underage drinking and inadequate attention to alcohol policy were major impediments to their success.

This section is written to assist you in implementing these recommendations in your community. It is organized in two parts. *Building Community Support to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol* outlines elements of effective grassroots campaigns. *Strategies to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol in Your Community* offers examples of successful coalition efforts that have reduced underage drinking and saved lives.

This section illustrates the power of public ideas. Changing public policy is possible. Communities like yours have reduced underage drinking through coalition-building, media and advocacy strategies, policy panels, and other promotional events. ***You can too!***

Photo courtesy of Mt. Tacoma High School, Tacoma, Washington.

1

Recommendation 1

It should be illegal for individuals under age 21 to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their bodies.

2

Recommendation 2

There should be a 5-cent per-drink increase on the current federal excise tax on all alcoholic beverages.

3

Recommendation 3

All retail outlets and private individuals should be held liable for negligently providing alcohol to a minor.

4

Recommendation 4

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5

Recommendation 5

Local government officials and community coalitions around the country should systematically assess youth access to alcohol in their communities and examine ways to reduce this access.

Building Community Support to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING:

It is easier to bring about lasting change when you have the support of a cross section of organizations and people representing your community.

Form Alliances

Community norms play a powerful role in determining what is "acceptable" behavior for youth. Therefore, it is important to gain the support of a broad cross section of community members when you are trying to change accepted standards of behavior. Use the issue of underage drinking and its adverse consequences to get as many groups involved in your efforts as possible. Underage drinking is an issue that has attracted a lot of attention and one that is important to many groups. These groups can offer valuable resources that will help your coalition be more successful. Expand your base and broaden your vision by asking:

- Who is already participating in our efforts?
- Who is not participating yet?
- What obstacles, if any, are keeping other people from participating?
- What must we do to get them to participate?
- What help do we need from outside groups to achieve our goals?

Include your natural allies—schools, parent/teacher organizations, teachers' unions, highway safety agencies, insurance companies, pediatricians, hospital emergency room caregivers, MADD, and SADD. Locate these and other groups by speaking with your local school, city hall, public health, or law enforcement officials. Ask civic associations that are active in your community to join you, and to recommend other allies.

Know Your Opposition

Who is likely to oppose your efforts? How can you create a dialogue with your opponents to facilitate change? Some steps you can take include:

- Identify your opponents.
- Identify the underlying issues that are causing friction between you and your opponents.
- Conduct research to be well-informed about the issues.

- Listen to your opponents' concerns. Put yourself in their shoes and try to understand their position.
- Seek common ground. Is there a solution that will benefit both sides? You may only agree on lesser aspects of the issue, but any agreement is a step toward understanding.
- Develop counter arguments and use your resources effectively to promote your message.

MEDIA:

The news media are key to your efforts to influence public opinion and change community norms.

Meet the Press

Establish your credibility with the local news media as a source for information on substance abuse issues. Build relationships by meeting regularly with newspaper publishers and editors, and with television, radio, and cable station managers, news, programming, and public service executives.

In preparation for an initial media meeting, review the station's or newspaper's coverage of substance abuse issues. Look at the overall tone and content of programming, feature stories, public service campaigns, advertising policies, station identification taglines, and promotional themes. These will give you an idea of the issues that are important to those in charge of editorial content or programming.

Come to the meeting prepared with local data and examples. Emphasize the importance of the underage drinking issue in your community by presenting local statistics on the prevalence of underage drinking and powerful anecdotes about the consequences.

Customize your request for coverage according to your contacts' area of interest. For example, you could suggest a story on how easy it is for kids in the community to purchase alcohol. Another story idea might be the amount of alcohol that people consume at local ball games, festivals, or other events, and the problems that arise as a result.

Persistence, awareness of the media's needs, and courtesy will make your media efforts pay off. Your first meeting with a newspaper editorial board or station manager may not result in immediate news coverage or public service programming. Often it is a matter of timing. Continue the dialogue by keeping your contacts up-to-date on the issue. When news about a substance abuse issue does break, you'll be in a position to help shape the story.

Don't forget the common courtesies and special efforts that will improve your relationship with the media. Send thank you notes and letters praising feature articles and news programs. Use award luncheons and recognition certificates to show local cable, radio, and television stations, and newspapers that you appreciate their collaboration. Remember, reporters, producers, and editors need, and appreciate, feedback too.

Examples of Strong Coalition/Media Relationships

In Santa Barbara, California, the Fighting Back coalition invited the local newspaper publisher to head the coalition's media task force. Staff also involved the manager of a local television station, who agreed to air the coalition's video, "Trouble In Paradise," during prime time. This helped the public understand that alcohol use and abuse was a major community problem. The television station, convinced of the importance of the alcohol problem and conscious of its own power to mobilize support, agreed to produce a weekly feature story on alcohol issues for the 6:00 PM news. The feature stories ran from early 1992 to January 1993. The station now uses "Fighting Back" as a tagline to identify all drug-and alcohol-related stories.

In Massachusetts, the Governor's Alliance Against Drugs joined forces with the NBC-TV affiliate (WBZ) in Boston to create "Drug Busters," a theatrical presentation and discussion program for elementary school children and their parents. The program was moderated by news anchors who brought the performance to more than 50 elementary schools. The station received a very positive response to the program.

PUBLIC EVENTS:

Public hearings, youth rallies, dramatic performances, and other special events can highlight the problem of underage drinking and motivate the community to work to reduce it.

Make it Public

Events such as a public hearing, youth congress, or poster contest can help your coalition achieve several goals. These events simultaneously motivate participants, inform the community at large, and promote the issue of underage drinking by offering the media a story with real local news value.

Be creative in your selection and promotion of special events. Use the event to attract additional groups to your coalition as participants or sponsors. Be sure to involve all members of your coalition, as their support is necessary to ensure widespread interest in the event.

Prepare materials for the local media to announce the event and to report on the results. Use the event as an opportunity to describe the prevalence and consequences of underage drinking; include statistics and human interest stories. The background section of this report (page 3) provides a good summary of the problem of underage drinking at the national level. The information can be used to develop fact sheets and to illustrate the scope of the problem, but whenever possible, use local data.

Policy Panels

Policy panels can be particularly useful for developing local recommendations on underage drinking. Community leaders can serve as panelists and witnesses. Local statistics and examples can be featured, and local liquor laws, retail and server practices, and alcohol advertising can be targeted for change.

Things to Consider in Planning a Local Policy Panel:

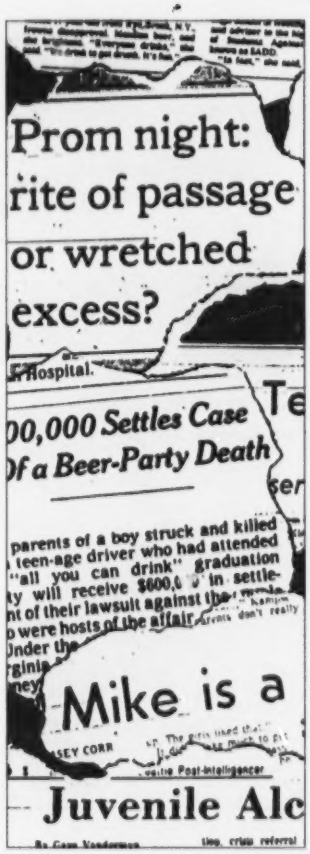
- Select an issue that will enable the panel to develop clear, concise recommendations to bring about the changes you have identified as key to reducing underage access.
- Name a chairperson with credibility on the issue, and who is recognized as a community leader.
- Select panel members who represent key segments of your community. This Join Together panel included a student, police chief, former governor, local liquor licensing authority director, coalition project director, a MADD representative, and a researcher. You may want to include individuals who have had very different experiences with alcohol-related issues, such as a college president and an emergency room caregiver.
- The panel should meet prior to the hearing to organize its agenda and to hear background briefings. Provide background material; use the Join Together recommendations.
- Identify witnesses to testify using local statistics and experiences. People who have been directly harmed by teenage drinking can be particularly effective witnesses because they can make the issue real to others. You may also want to include individuals who represent different perspectives of the underage drinking issue to provide a comprehensive overview, as well as groups that oppose your approach to learn more about their views.
- Publicize the hearing to coalition members, outside groups, and the general public.
- Invite the media to cover the hearing as a news event; a local cable channel may want to videotape it.
- Promote the panel's final report. Use media and coalition organizations to publicize and gain support for the recommendations. Invite groups interested in youth issues (e.g., SADD, Boys/Girls Clubs, MADD, 4-H) to play a prominent role, even if they are not active in your coalition. Involve youth in endorsing the recommendations.
- Follow-up on the recommendations. Schedule meetings with public officials and others who will implement the recommendations. Issue a report card one year after the hearing to measure community progress and to grade local officials' commitment to change.

ADVOCACY

Educate local opinion leaders about the scope of underage drinking in your community, and persuade them to work with you to try to reduce it.

Advocate for Change

To advocate for change, begin by learning about state and local community laws and regulations that restrict underage drinking. Then talk with your local legislator, district attorney, liquor licensing official, police chief, student groups, and MADD representative. Discuss existing laws and how they can be more effective. (You can use the Join Together recommendations as a guide.) Learn about the process and the time frame for changing laws and regulations in your community and state. Identify legislators who are active—or at least interested—in the issue by consulting with your local legislator and some of the groups mentioned above.



Things to Consider in Changing State and Local Laws and Regulations:

- Establish a relationship with your legislators. They rely on people like you for new ideas.
- Provide your legislative allies with background statistics and anecdotes that describe the problem of underage drinking in your community. Use these materials to illustrate community support and to show how your proposed changes would reduce underage drinking and save lives.
- Work with your legislator to draft and file legislation.
- Follow the progress of any legislation closely. The sponsoring legislator will show you how to do this. When the legislation is being reviewed at a committee hearing, be prepared to present testimony. Bring allies from districts represented by other members of the committee. Provide materials to other witnesses, the committee, and the news media covering the hearing.
- Most of the Join Together recommendations can also be adapted for local and state licensing and zoning regulatory agencies that oversee alcohol sales and service.
- Use your media contacts to publicize your legislative initiative, and to gain editorial endorsements to persuade legislators to vote for your bill.

Strategies to Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol in Your Community

The five Join Together policy panel recommendations are described below, with steps and strategies for implementation, examples of successful community efforts, possible barriers, and resources to contact for further information.

Recommendation 1

It should be illegal for individuals under age 21 to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their bodies.

Some key steps you can take to enact this recommendation in your community:

- Find out what the current legal Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) level is for minors in your state.
- Expand your existing coalition to include organizations that support zero tolerance (0.00-0.02 BAC) laws. These could include police, school leaders, juvenile court judges, youth, and community organizations, as well as local substance abuse agencies, neighborhood groups, and state and local government officials.
- Educate your governor and other state officials about the costs of drunk driving in the state and the benefits of a zero tolerance law.
- Meet with state legislators and tell them why this issue is important. Ask them to support zero tolerance legislation.

What Others Have Done. . .

Maine was the first state to pass a lower BAC level for youth.

In 1983, Maine passed a .02 BAC level for drivers under age 21. Lead organizations for the bill included MADD, the Governor's Office and the Maine Office of Public Safety. There was virtually no opposition to this law because the administrative per se law, allowing police to revoke an offender's license on the scene, was already in place. **Since the 1983 law was passed, the number of youth killed in alcohol-related car crashes has declined by 44%.**

Even if you are successful in passing such a law, you may face opposition *after* the law is passed. In Maine, a class action lawsuit was filed on behalf of two 18-year-olds who violated the law. The youth claimed that the law discriminated against people under 20 because there was not a significant difference in the number of alcohol-related accidents for people under 20 and people over 20. The court ruled to uphold the law.

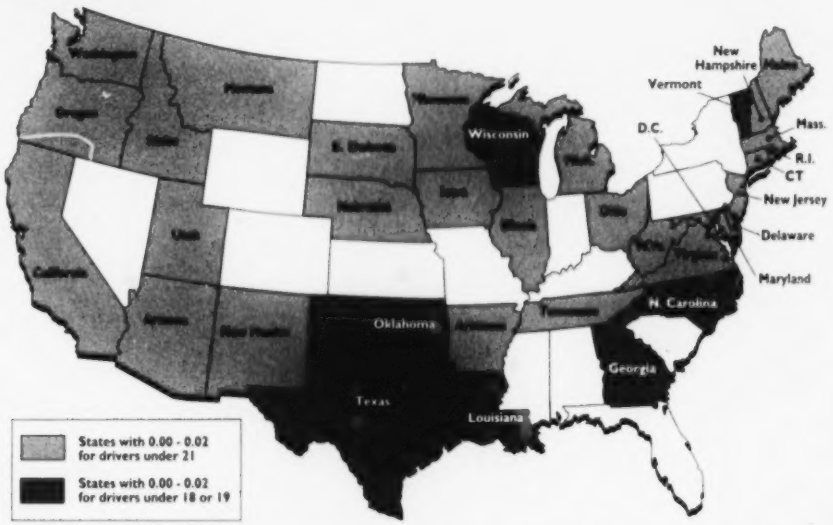
The Maine experience also illustrates that education should go hand-in-hand with enacting a new law. A survey conducted three months after the law was passed in Maine found that many youth did not know about the law and the penalties for breaking it. In

response, the Maine Department of Education produced a video for high school students to teach them about the .02 law and its consequences. The video and public service announcements were broadcast on local TV and resulted in a significant increase in awareness about the .02 law among youth.

For more information, contact: Maine Department of Education, Office of Substance Abuse Information and Resource Center, State House Station, Number 57, Stevens Complex, Augusta, ME 04333; (207) 624-6525 or (800) 499-0021, extension one.

In March 1993, Arkansas passed a BAC level of .02 for youth.

States with Lower Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) Levels and/or Pending Legislation for Minors



When the Arkansas House of Representatives began its review of a proposal for a .02 BAC level for drivers under 21 in March of 1993, opponents of the measure countered with a proposed .05 level. Arkansans for Drug Free Youth (ADFY) contacted Join Together for information in support of a lower BAC level. Join Together responded, citing the panel's .00 BAC level recommendation and research conducted by Dr. Ralph Hingson. The research indicates that states with BAC levels of .04 and above did not achieve significant declines in nighttime auto crash fatalities, while states with BAC levels of .02 and below did. Legal BAC levels of .02 and below send a clear message to youth that it is illegal to drive after consuming any amount of alcohol. Legal levels of .04 and above send a message that it is okay for youth to drink and drive. Using this information, ADFY helped to defeat the higher .05 BAC amendment. Within a week, the House enacted the .02 BAC level, and Governor Tucker signed it into law.

For more information, contact: Dawn Berry, National Family Partnership of Arkansas, 2020 West Third Street, Suite 1C, Little Rock, AR 72205; (501) 375-1338.

In Maryland, drivers' licenses issued to drivers under 21 years of age are imprinted with the words "Under 21-Alcohol Restricted."

The restriction is part of Maryland's .02 BAC law for people under 21, passed in January of 1989. In addition to the license restriction, a public information campaign was developed to publicize the .02 law and the penalties for breaking it. A brochure

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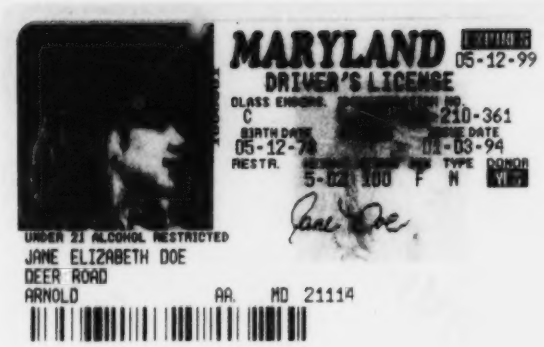


about underage drinking and driving is distributed by the Motor Vehicle Administration and the State Highway Administration to high schools, student clubs, colleges, universities, and health fairs throughout the state. **There has been a 50% reduction in crashes involving underage drinkers since the .02 law was passed in Maryland.**

For more information, contact: Kathryn Lesby-Treber, Maryland State Highway Administration, Office of Traffic and Safety, 7491 Connelley Drive, Hanover, MD 21076; (410) 787-4079 or (410) 787-4077.

Finding Out More. . .

You may want to contact the following organizations for more information about lowering BAC levels for youth:

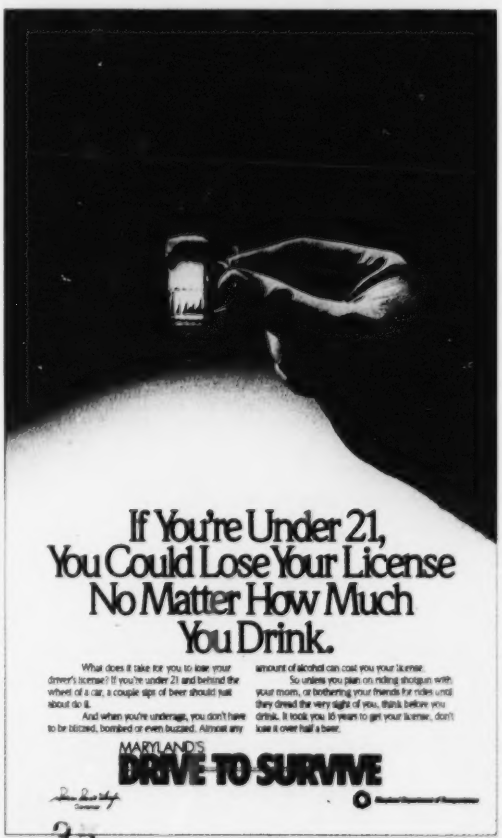
Administrative License Revocation Coalition, c/o Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, 777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 410, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 408-1711 or (800) 659-2247. This group provides technical assistance and information to coalitions on how to adopt administrative license revocation. This regulation allows a police officer to take a driver's license away until the offender's court date if a driver's BAC level is above the limit or if the driver refuses to take a breath test.

Remove Intoxicated Drivers USA (RID), P.O. Box 520, Schenectady, NY 12301; (518) 393-4357. This group can provide information on working with victims, particularly in court, to push for stronger BAC laws. RID also offers strategies for raising the taxes on beer and other alcoholic beverages.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), 511 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Suite 700, Irving, TX 75062; (214) 744-6233. MADD's *How-to Compendium,* and *Youth Issues Compendium,* (1990), cover youth and drinking, enforcement, sanctions, responsible marketing, and service of alcoholic beverages. Available from your state Office of Highway Safety, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) regional office serving your state, or from NHTSA headquarters.

In Wyoming —

Peer pressure and sad tales are being used to prevent drunk driving in Laramie County, Wyoming. The county will create a panel of convicted drunk drivers and victims of drunk driving crashes, which will seek to educate residents about the dangers of drinking and driving. The county coroner will be included on this panel. Other states have similar panels in place. For more information, contact Rick Robinson, Pathfinders, 121 West Carlson, Cheyenne, WY 82009; (307) 635-0256.


If You're Under 21,
You Could Lose Your License
No Matter How Much
You Drink.
What does it take for you to lose your driver's license? If you're under 21 and behind the wheel of a car, a couple sips of beer should suit about do it.
And when you're underage, you don't have to be blitzed, bombed or even buzzed. Almost any amount of alcohol can cost you your license.
So unless you plan on riding shotgun with your mom, or bothering your friends for rides until they dread the very sight of you, think before you drink. It took you 16 years to get your license, don't lose it over half a beer.
MARYLAND'S
DRIVE TO SURVIVE

Recommendation 2

There should be a 5-cent per-drink increase on the current federal excise tax on all alcoholic beverages.

This recommendation would adjust the alcohol tax rate for inflation. Since taxes haven't kept up with inflation, it is much cheaper to purchase alcohol today than it was 30 years ago. In 1990, the United States Congress raised taxes on beer, wine, and liquor; taxes were also raised on liquor in 1985. These tax hikes were enacted as a source of revenue to counter soaring budget deficits.

Studies on the effects of state excise taxes on beer consumption by youth ages 16-21 have shown that when taxes on beer are increased, consumption has decreased.* Therefore, you may want to consider working to raise excise taxes in your state.

Some key steps you can take to enact this recommendation in your community:

- Find out what the tax rate on alcohol (beer, wine, spirits) is in your state. When was it last raised? How does it compare with inflation?
- Build public support by describing the benefits of a tax increase, i.e., additional revenue for public health programs, and the benefits of reduced alcohol consumption. Use radio and TV talk shows to reach the public.
- Unite public health forces to sponsor a ballot initiative to raise alcohol taxes. Coalition members can work to raise awareness of the issue and gain community support.
- Educate key legislative staff about why they should raise state taxes on alcohol.
- Publicize successful examples of other communities that have raised alcohol taxes. (Tax hikes have been enacted in California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbis, Florida, Hawaii, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island and Texas.)

* *Effects of Alcoholic Beverage Prices and Legal Ages on Youth Alcohol Use*, National Bureau of Economic Research, 1989.

In 1989:

Connecticut increased the beer tax from $3 to $6 per barrel.

Maine increased the tax on alcoholic beverages sold in bars from 5% to 10%.

Rhode Island increased the alcoholic beverage tax rate by 50%.

In 1990:

New York increased the tax on beer from 11 cents to 21 cents per gallon.

In 1991:

California imposed a surtax on beer, wine and distilled spirits, and imposed an equivalent compensatory floor stock tax on beer, wine and distilled spirits.

Maine reduced the tax on liquor sold in licensed establishments from 10% to 7%.

North Carolina increased from $15 to $20 per gallon liquor purchased for mixed beverage sales.

In 1992:

The District of Columbia increased the sales tax rate on alcoholic beverages from 6% to 8%.

Montana imposed a temporary 7% surtax on liquor excise, beer and table wine taxes from 7/92 to 6/93.

New Jersey increased the tax rate on liquor (from $4.20 to $4.40 per gallon), wine (from 50 cents to 70 cents per gallon) and beer (from 10 cents to 12 cents per gallon).

In 1993:

New Mexico increased the excise tax on beer (from 18 cents to 35 cents per gallon), wine (from 25 cents to 34 cents per liter) and spirits (from $1.04 to $1.50 per liter).

Ohio increased the tax rates on alcoholic beverages by 12.5% for beer in containers and by 50% for liquor and mixed beverages.

Washington increased the tax on beer (from $4.78 to $5.74 per barrel) and spirits (from $2.03 to $2.23 per liter), and imposed a 1.1% surtax on retail liquor sales.

In 1994:

New York equalized tax rates on sparkling and nonsparkling wines, including champagne.

In 1995:

New York decreased the tax on beer from 21 cents to 16 cents per gallon.

SOURCE: National Conference of State Legislators. "State Tax Actions," 1991-1994.

What Others Have Done. . .

Barriers

Alcohol tax increases save lives by reducing consumption, especially among young people. Reduced consumption means reduced revenues for the alcohol industry, an industry that will strongly oppose any attempts to raise alcohol taxes. One argument commonly used is that an alcohol tax is regressive and falls on those least able to afford such a tax — the lower and middle classes.

A counter argument is that these same groups are often the most susceptible to alcohol-related injuries and the adverse health consequences of consumption. Unable to pay for the health care they require, these costs are passed on to people who have not contributed to the problem.

Nickel-a-Drink Initiative sets the stage for California's first tax increase in over twenty years.

In California, citizens organized a ballot initiative in 1988 to raise the state alcohol tax. Nicknamed "Nickel-a-Drink," the measure was defeated by voters in 1990. However, eight months after the election, the state legislature voted to approve an alcohol tax hike as part of the 1992 budget. The issue's visibility and strong public support were key factors in the one and a half cent per-drink tax increase—the first such increase in twenty years. Key factors in the initiative's success include:

- The Nickel-a-Drink coalition included many groups: physicians, park and recreation departments, highway patrolmen's association, children's advocates, substance abuse treatment providers, recovering people, and mental health providers.

- The initiative was carefully packaged to gain media attention. The name "Nickel-a-Drink" focused on the fact that the tax was to be paid by those who drink; the term "nickel" was intended to portray the tax as reasonable and inexpensive.

- Given limited financial resources, free media coverage was essential to the media campaign's success. Under the Fairness Doctrine, campaign organizers obtained TV and radio air time equal to their opponents' to present their case. (The Fairness Doctrine supports a principle of donated broadcast television and radio time for outspent opposition groups in political contests.)

For more information, contact: Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), 1501 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036; (202) 332-9110.

Finding Out More. . .

You may want to contact the following organization for more information on increasing alcohol taxes:

Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), George Hacker, 1501 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036; (202) 332-9110. CSPI publishes: *Impact of Alcohol Excise Tax Increases on Federal Revenues, Alcohol Consumption, and Alcohol Problems; State Alcohol Taxes: Case Studies of the Impact of Higher Excise Taxes in 14 States and the District of Columbia; A Guide to Alcohol Taxes and Health (available 11/95).*

Recommendation 3

All retail outlets and private individuals should be held liable for negligently providing alcohol to a minor.

Retail availability refers to liquor stores, bars and restaurants, variety stores, convenience markets, and gas stations that sell alcohol. Social host availability refers to private parties, special events, and college functions where alcohol is available to all guests. Communities have the power to regulate alcohol availability and consumption by minors through local planning and zoning ordinances and through city codes governing the use of public areas as places to drink.

Some key steps you can take to enact this recommendation in your community:

- Find out which liquor outlets in your community sell alcohol to minors, and work to reduce this access.
- Learn what your state or local Alcohol Beverage Control Commission (ABCC) does and what laws currently govern serving practices.
- Find out about legislation that makes it illegal to serve minors. In many places, dram shop laws or civil liability precedents specifically allow lawsuits against people who provide alcohol to minors.
- Review your state's server licensing laws. Are there mandates requiring server training for bartenders and other service personnel on the state's alcohol laws, regulations, and penalties?
- Review state laws for loopholes. For example, although all states prohibit outlets from selling alcohol to minors, in 19 states it is not illegal for a minor to attempt to purchase alcohol. (See sidebar.)
- Work to pass laws that make it an offense to manufacture or use a fake ID.

Business Involvement

The Southland Corporation of Dallas, Texas, the parent company of 7-Eleven convenience stores, has developed a program to reduce alcohol sales to minors in their stores.

The program, called "Come of Age," trains 7-Eleven employees to handle customers who refuse to provide an ID, provide a fake ID, or become unruly. The company posts signs in all stores that prominently announce the "no sale to minors" policy; all clerks are encouraged to wear buttons that state the policy; employees who fail to check IDs risk the possibility of losing their jobs.

Loopholes in State Laws

- Nineteen states do not make it illegal for a minor to attempt to purchase alcohol.
- Four states have no laws against minors who purchase alcohol.
- Thirty-one states have exceptions, other than relating to employment, that allow minors to possess alcohol. Most commonly, minors may possess with parental permission or in private settings. Some states make it illegal only if the minors intend to consume the alcohol.
- Seventeen states have no laws that make consumption by minors specifically illegal, although the minor may be charged under possession laws.
- Fourteen states have no laws prohibiting minors from deliberately misrepresenting their age to obtain alcohol.
- Eleven states have no laws prohibiting minors from presenting false identification.

SOURCES:
National Transportation Safety Board. "State Age 21 Laws." August 1994.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. "Digest of State Highway Safety Related Legislation." January 1995.

. . .What Others Have Done

Southland has sponsored a poster contest and co-sponsored Red Ribbon campaigns, Project Graduation, and SADD events. For more information contact: The Southland Corporation, Corporate Communications, 2711 North Haskell Avenue, Dallas, TX 75204; (214) 828-7345.

Stings:

Sting operations use underage or youthful looking buyers (decoys) to purchase alcohol as a way to identify merchants who sell alcohol to minors.

Once identified as a repeat server to minors, merchants can be penalized or fined. Stings work to ensure the effectiveness of purchase age laws, thereby reducing alcohol-related motor vehicle deaths and other negative health consequences among young people and adults. Sting operations should include follow-up in court to be sure that sanctions are imposed on the offender.

Doctors and Lawyers for a Drug-Free Youth has conducted sting operations in 55 U.S. cities.

Members of this organization believe that stings are an effective and inexpensive way ($11 per sting) to control the sale of alcohol to minors. One of its strategies is to use decoys who look much younger than 21, and have them attempt to purchase alcohol using the ID of someone who does not resemble them. They recommend that communities conduct comprehensive stings at least twice a year and that violators be checked monthly until they are in compliance.

For more information contact: Dr. Tom Radecki, Executive Director, Doctors and Lawyers for a Drug-Free Youth, P.O. Box 2653, Champaign, IL 61825-2653; (217) 328-3349.

Denver, Colorado, is conducting successful stings.

Police cadets under age 21 serve as "decoys" attempting to purchase beer in randomly-chosen stores. After each sting, a press conference is held to announce the results. Warnings are sent to the offending liquor outlets threatening prosecution if they sell to minors again. Outlets caught twice selling to minors are immediately cited and are given the option of having their license suspended or paying a fine. If caught a third time, the outlet's liquor license is suspended for six months. Outlets that did not sell to minors are thanked and told they will be visited again. As a result of the stings and intensive follow-up activity, many outlets have stopped selling alcohol to minors.

For more information contact: Dr. David Preusser, PRG Incorporated, 7100 Main Street, Trumbull, CT 06611; (203) 459-8700.

Keg Registration:
Saving Lives Program in Marlborough, Massachusetts

Marlborough was one of six Massachusetts communities that participated in the Saving Lives traffic safety program, funded by the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau and the Commonwealth Fund. All sites formed coalitions working to reduce the injuries and deaths from traffic crashes. Each coalition included representatives from law enforcement, government, and business, as well as alcohol servers, educators, and community leaders. Each Saving Lives program sponsored community initiatives on impaired driving, pedestrian safety, speeding awareness, and bicycle safety.

Marlborough's Saving Lives site also ran a keg identification program. Each keg was tagged and the purchaser's name was recorded by the liquor store dealer. A $40 keg identification deposit was charged. If the keg was returned without the ID tag in place, the dealer kept the $40 deposit. Police can use the tags to identify adults who purchase kegs for parties where minors are served, resulting in an increase in the number of adults prosecuted for serving beer to minors.

As a result of the keg registration program's success, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has institutionalized the program by adopting a statewide regulation making registration of all beer kegs mandatory.

For more information, contact: Chief Joseph Barry, Marlborough Police Department, Marlborough, MA 01752; (508) 485-1212.

Server Training Programs:
Collaboration between the Amherst Police and the University of Massachusetts

The University of Massachusetts in Amherst and the Amherst Police Department co-sponsor alcohol server trainings that focus on liability, alcohol service, and fake identifications. Liquor store and restaurant owners and their staff are invited to the training by the police chief. At the training, liability law and the possible penalties for serving a minor are explained.

For more information, contact: Captain David Jankowski, Amherst Police Department, Main Street, Amherst, MA 01002; (413) 256-4016.

In California —

A recent California state court decision makes stings illegal, despite their success.

Before the court ruling, stings were deterrents to retailers selling alcohol to minors. Several hundred young people in the state were trained and paid to participate in sting operations. Because the stings embarrassed retailers, they filed suit based on a state law that prohibited anyone under 21 from purchasing alcohol.

The court interpreted the law to mean that it applied to anyone under 21—no matter what their intent—and ruled in favor of the retailers, making stings illegal. The decision was upheld in a subsequent appeal, and stings are now prohibited in California. Police rely instead on stake-outs to enforce under 21 purchasing laws.

In Colorado —

Some Colorado residents can now link directly into police headquarters if they suspect a teen keg party is going on. Police in Arvada, Colorado, have set up a hot line for residents to call to report keg parties. The move comes in the wake of a series of fatal drunk driving crashes involving teenagers. "One of the purposes of the hot line is to give the community direct access to the police department. The hotline is the voice of the community," said Ted Mink, of the Arvada Police Department.

For more information, contact Ted Mink, Office of Investigations, Arvada Police Department, 8101 Ralston Rd., Arvada, CO 80001; (303) 431-3062.

College Campuses:

As of December, 1991, fraternity parties at the University of Pennsylvania are being monitored by the local Inter-fraternity Council (IFC) to prevent violations of the "dry-rush" policy.

Many universities and IFCs have adopted similar policies. They have been motivated partly by fear of lawsuits and skyrocketing liability insurance rates. Many national fraternities and universities are also taking an active role in campus alcohol reform. Among the reforms encouraged by IFCs are keg bans, eliminating open parties, and greater vigilance to discourage underage drinking. Some student groups are controlling the campus party scene through party patrols, peer educators, and other interventions.

As of 1991, 34 of the 62 national college fraternities had stopped having kegs at fraternity functions. A number of universities and colleges, including Brown University and Skidmore College, have also recently banned kegs.

Finding Out More. . .

You may want to contact the following organizations for more information:

Health Promotion Resource Center, Stanford Center for Research in Disease Prevention, 1000 Welch Road, Palo Alto, CA 94304-1885; (415) 724-0003. Contact: Linda Salzer. The Center publishes *Responsible Beverage Service: An Implementation Handbook for Communities*, by James Mosher. This handbook explains how community leaders can help restaurants, bar owners, and patrons become more conscious of the risks associated with serving alcohol, and helps them evaluate policies for reducing those risks.

Maine Bureau of Liquor Enforcement, State House Station 87, Augusta, ME 04333; (207) 287-3571. Contact: Bob La Guardia for more information on the bureau's routine inspections of establishments licensed to sell liquor, including supermarkets, and monitoring of alcohol sales to minors throught its sting operation program called "Officers As Agents." The Bureau has also established a statewide alcoholic beverage server training program to promote responsible serving of alcoholic beverages.

National Public Service Research Institute, 8201 Corporate Drive, Suite 220, Landover, MD 20785; (301) 731-9891. Contact: James McKnight, Ph.D., for information on seller/server training programs.

Did You Know That:

- Ohio and New Hampshire are among the states that require police to send letters to high school principals about enhanced enforcement activities during prom and graduation time.
- In Oregon, when school personnel hear about a party attended by teens where alcohol was served, they contact the Alcohol Beverage Control Commission. The Commission then sends a letter to the parents about the potential liability of hosting a party where minors are served alcohol.

Recommendation 4

4

Each television, radio, and cable operator who runs advertisements promoting alcoholic beverages should be required to provide equal time for counter advertisements about the health risks associated with alcohol consumption.

Counter advertising can include all advertising mediums, including billboards, newspapers, college papers, magazines, and posters. Community festivals, college functions, spring break promotions, and sporting events are also seen by the alcohol industry as opportunities to advertise alcoholic beverages, and can be targeted for presenting counter advertising messages.

Some key steps you can take to limit alcohol advertising aimed at youth, and to provide a more balanced view of alcohol consumption in your community:

- Ask local broadcasters or their statewide association to voluntarily limit alcohol advertising to hours when youth are unlikely to be viewing or listening. Ask them to air alcohol counter ads that discourage underage drinking during times when youth will be viewing or listening.
- Enlist your local advertising council to develop strong counter ads for broadcast, print, and billboard media.
- Conduct a survey to locate billboards that advertise alcohol in your community. Is one neighborhood more heavily "targeted" than others? Publicize the results and encourage "targeted" neighborhoods to work with you.
- Work to enact ordinances to curtail advertising of alcohol near schools, low-income housing, and minority neighborhoods where billboards are often placed in disproportionate numbers compared to other neighborhoods.
- Negotiate a ban on new billboards advertising alcohol. Ask companies to remove those already in place.
- Work to eliminate alcohol promotions on college campuses and at events where minors are present in large numbers.
- Eliminate the use of celebrities to promote alcohol consumption.
- Work to regulate alcohol advertising at local festivals and events, and on public transportation vehicles and facilities.

What Others Have Done. . .

Billboard Advertising

Detroit was the first city to launch a campaign against alcohol billboard advertising, led by city councilwoman Alberta Tinsley-Williams of the Coalition Against Billboard Advertising of Alcohol and Tobacco. Neighborhood leaders developed strategies that included encouraging people to boycott products advertised, asking officials not to use billboards in elections, and picketing billboard companies' facilities.

Designated Drivers

After a popular newsman from the NBC-TV affiliate (WBZ) in Boston was killed in a drunk driving accident, a professor from the Harvard School of Public Health transformed public concern into a major national anti-drinking and driving movement. He persuaded several TV producers to incorporate the "designated driver" concept into the story lines of their prime time shows. In addition, PSAs were aired, asking people to designate a non-drinking driver on social outings.

The Washington State Association of Broadcasters (WSAB) worked with community groups to develop a voluntary counter advertising campaign.

First, the Association's Alcohol Task Force held focus groups to explore the reasons why teens drink. The focus groups provided a forum for teens to make suggestions on preventing alcohol use by young people. Using the teens' suggestions, public service announcements (PSAs) were developed and aired on radio and television. The campaign's theme, "Get a Life, It's Your Choice "was designed to make teens realize that it is within their power to decide not to drink and to realize the value of changing their behavior. Taglines included: "Get a life/Have self-respect; Decide what is best for you," and "Alcohol. It destroys all that's near and dear to you. Your family, friendships, and most important, you."

For more information, contact: Mark Allen, Washington State Association of Broadcasters/Alcohol Task Force, 924 Capitol Way South, Suite 104, Olympia, WA 98501; (360) 705-0774. WSAB publishes a community outreach handbook, *Tough Choices: Tackling the Teen Alcohol Problem.*

In Milwaukee, a community coalition succeeded in limiting the number of billboards advertising alcohol located in low-income neighborhoods.

After citizens documented more than 1,500 tobacco and alcohol ads in the inner city, billboard companies agreed to limit tobacco and alcohol advertising to no more than 50% of existing billboards and not to erect any new billboards in the area. Billboard companies also agreed to serve on a review committee to monitor the content of bill-

Across the country, communities are working to eliminate billboards advertising alcohol products.
Photo courtesy of the University of Medicine and Dentistry, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

board ads. In addition, the billboard owners now contribute free billboard space for anti-smoking and anti-drinking messages, designed by area art students.

The campaign was originally called "Erase and Replace", and has since evolved into a contest called "Don't Smoke, Don't Drink: Kids Get the Message." Youth use their creativity to draw posters that they think depict the "Don't Smoke, Don't Drink" message. First, second and third place winners are chosen by peers from three age groups (10-12 years, 13-15 years, and 16-18 years). The first prize winners are taken to the printing press and shown the process that will turn their drawings into full-size billboards.

For more information, contact: James Mosley, Milwaukee Fighting Back, 1726 N. First Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212; (414) 374-7880.

You may want to contact the following organizations for more information about counter advertising:

Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20009; (202) 332-9110. Publishes a guide, *Alcohol Warning Posters: How to get Legislation Passed in Your City*, to help communities place alcohol warning posters wherever alcoholic beverages are sold. Also available is *Double Dip: The Simultaneous Decline of Alcohol Advertising and Alcohol Problems in the United States.*

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20847-2345; (800) 729-6686. Publishes: *Youth and Alcohol: Summary of Research, Alcohol Advertising's Effect on Youth*, and *Youth and Alcohol: Controlling Alcohol Advertising That Appeals to Youth*, and *Inspector General's Reports on Youth and Alcohol: Selected Reports to the Surgeon General.*

Finding Out More. . .

Did You Know That:

- KSL-TV in Salt Lake City is no longer broadcasting beer and wine ads, despite resulting revenue loss. Station executives decided that this was an important and necessary step toward reducing the rising rate of alcohol-related accidents and deaths among young people.
- Liquor retailers in Dade County, Florida, must display bilingual posters warning against alcohol sales to minors. This is the first municipality to set such a requirement.
- In Orlando, Florida, billboard companies are required to remove three billboards advertising alcohol in exchange for every new billboard erected. Similar billboard exchange ordinances have been passed in Mobile, Alabama, and Seattle, Washington.

5

Recommendation 5

Local government officials and community coalitions around the country should systematically assess youth access to alcohol in their communities and examine ways to reduce this access.

Alcohol is readily available to youth in both private homes and public places. At least half of all drinking occurs in public places or at public events. Public access is provided by cities and counties that permit public drinking in parks and sports stadiums, and at festivals, beaches, and public events.

Some key steps you can take to examine the issue of underage access to alcohol in your community:

- Conduct surveys and focus groups to identify the problems to be addressed by your coalition. Surveys can be conducted by youth at malls, in schools, and during special events. Focus groups can be held with students, parents, police, coaches, and youth workers.
- Use the results to broaden your coalition and to build support by demonstrating the relationship between underage drinking and other community concerns, such as gang violence, vandalism, and date rape.
- Identify your allies.
- Develop an action plan.

Photo courtesy of the University of Medicine and Dentistry, The Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

- Involve young people in each step of the decision-making process.
- Hold a public hearing and invite all interested parties. Publicize the results.
- Work closely with the media to create public awareness of the issue.
- Use national survey results to highlight local examples and statistics and build community support.
- Work with legislators to enact change.

Since Join Together first issued this report in 1993, several communities have replicated the policy panel concept locally.

. . . What Others Have Done

Here are some examples:

Franklin County Prevention Institute, Columbus, OH

After a survey in Columbus, Ohio, revealed that 68% of liquor stores in the area sold alcohol without asking for identification, the Franklin County Prevention Institute held a policy panel on the issue of underage drinking. State Legislator Charleta Tarvers and the president of the local alcohol and drug board served as co-chairs. Educational sessions for panel members were organized and three public hearings, co-sponsored by the Institute and other neighborhood organizations, were held.

The panel served to raise community awareness and generate support to reduce underage drinking. All sides of the issue were represented on the panel, resulting in almost no community or industry opposition to the panel. Community interest in the event was high and the public hearings were very well attended. The panel's final report will be issued in the fall 1995. Panel members have promised the community quarterly updates.

For more information, contact: Bill Crimi, Executive Director, Franklin County Prevention Institute, 700 Bryden Road, Suite 128, Columbus, OH 43215; (614) 224-8822.

Pathfinders of San Diego, CA

After state and county surveys revealed that students start to drink at younger ages and more frequently, Pathfinders decided to convene a policy panel on underage drinking. Prevention providers and youth advocates from San Diego county formed the steering committee and helped secure county funds for the event. Leaders from varied community components, including the PTA, media, business, law enforcement, school and health, formed the panel.

The panel's public hearing focused on four areas: education, land use & zoning, marketing, and law enforcement. Community members, and parents and youth, along with experts in each area, testified contributing to the final report and comprehensive community guide distributed statewide.

The panel members continue to meet periodically to see that their recommendations are implemented and to inform community groups about local efforts to reduce underage access to alcohol. One such example is a training program for liquor servers

that has since been created by the Responsible Hospitality Council, local ABC, and public health and law enforcement sectors as a result of the policy panel.

For more information, contact: Ray DiCiccio, Director, Pathfinders of San Diego, 3806 Grim Ave., San Diego, CA 92104; (619) 260-1612.

The Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission, Boston, MA

In 1993, Massachusetts Governor William Weld established the Underage Drinking Task Force to develop recommendations for policies and programs to reduce underage drinking. The head of the state Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission was appointed chair of the task force, and panel members included state agencies with different perspectives on the issue such as the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau, the Executive Office of Public Safety, the Executive Office of Education and the Department of Public Health's Bureau of Substance Abuse.

The panel held four public hearings with community constituent groups such as prevention advocates and treatment providers, representatives from the alcohol industry, community partnerships, parents and students. The principle recommendation to emerge from the policy panel was a call for a comprehensive approach to the issue of underage drinking including education, enforcement and communication. And, as a direct result of the panel is work, a bill is under consideration in the Massachusetts state legislature to implement enforcement activities like sting operations and the "Cop in Shop" program, which assigns undercover police officers to liquor stores for the purpose of enforcing laws prohibiting the sale, distribution and possession of liquor by underage persons.

For more information, contact: Pamela Nourse, The Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission, Leverett Saltonstall Bldg., Government Center, 100 Cambridge St., Boston, MA 02202; (617) 727-3040.

FRIDAY NIGHT Live

In California, Friday Night Live is saving lives.

Friday Night Live (FNL) is a statewide program that offers alcohol- and drug-free alternatives to youth. Local FNL chapters sponsor activities such as parties and leadership conferences to promote the new California lifestyle—alcohol and drug-free—and to bring youth together who support an alcohol- and drug-free environment. In Sacramento County, where all high schools have FNL chapters, alcohol-related deaths involving teens have decreased by more than 50% over an eight-year period.

For more information, contact: Paul Wyatt, Youth Prevention Services Section, Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, 1700 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 445-0860.

In Haverhill, Massachusetts, the CSAP Community Partnership and the Saving Lives Program work together to fight underage drinking.

The CSAP Partnership in Haverhill conducted a comprehensive set of surveys that

The CSAP Partnership in Haverhill conducted a comprehensive set of surveys that included schools (students, teachers, and staff), businesses, the general community, the Hispanic community, and neighborhood groups. These surveys found that alcohol is readily available to—and consumed by—underage youth. The results of these 1991 surveys were publicized, making it easier for local officials to gain support for their prevention efforts. Their strategies include helping high schools establish core groups of students who don't drink but who can still be viewed as "cool." The goal is to have these students serve as new role models for their peers.

The Haverhill Saving Lives Program, in conjunction with the Haverhill Police Department, Haverhill Licensing Commission and area police departments from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, have been conducting regional alcohol compliance checks in their respective towns or cities. Compliance checks may include undercover operations or checks of the establishment by uniformed personnel. These and other proactive measures, such as educational and technical support, are being taken to reduce underage purchase and sale of alcohol, and the incidence of drunk driving.

For more information, contact: John Cunio, Director, Haverhill Community Partnership, 25 Locust Street, Haverhill, MA 01830; (508) 373-1971, or Debbie Highes, Saving Lives, Citizens Center, 10 Welcome Street, Haverhill, MA 01830; (508) 374-2303.

Health educators find that school, parent and peer involvement are key to prevention efforts.

Cheryl Perry, professor of Epidemiology at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health, recommends that schools and communities work together with children at an early age to prevent substance abuse. To bring schools and parents closer together, she suggests that schools establish regular communication with parents and community groups through newsletters and special programs, and by recruiting parents to help in the classroom.

Research by Mary Ann Pentz, associate professor at the Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research, University of Southern California's School of Medicine, demonstrates that school-based prevention programs that include peer leaders are successful in teaching youth how to resist peer pressure and avoid drug use. She has also found that prevention efforts are even more successful when children are given assignments to do at home with their parents that require discussion about issues related to substance abuse.

Youth Involvement

In California, Farmer's Insurance Group sponsored a conference, "Young Drivers at Risk" in February of 1993. More than 60 young people got a crash course in lobbying and working with the media to help pass tougher drunk driving laws for minors in the state. They also visited their legislators to ask them to lower the legal BAC level for young drivers. For more information, contact by mail: Lorraine Enriquez, Farmer's Insurance Group, 4680 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010.

Finding Out More. . .

You may want to contact the following organizations for more information about assessing underage access to alcohol:

MADD/Gallup Organization, 511 East John Carpenter Freeway, Suite 700, Irving, TX 75062-8187, (214) 744-MADD. MADD and Gallup conducted a study in September, 1991, that measured the public's experience with, and attitude toward, drunk driving.

Institute for the Study of Social Change, 2232 Sixth Street, Berkeley, California, 94710; (510)540-4717. Contact: Friedner Wittman. Publishes *Manual for Community Planning to Prevent Problems of Alcohol Availability*, by Friedner D. Wittman, Ph.D. and Patricia Shane, MPH. This manual is intended to help communities become more effective in dealing with the problems associated with alcohol availability.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590; (202) 366- 2588. Contact John Wright, by mail, for copies of *Community Assessment Tool*, which is part of Tools for Community Action: Youth Traffic Safety Program.

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General Resources

Join Together Online

For more information about underage access to alcohol, subscribe to Join Together Online, an electronic resource center for communities fighting substance abuse. For a small access fee, users a local phone call away from a major city can easily access the latest information in the field. They can also learn from other community leaders about what works to fight alcohol and drugs, and share their own successful strategies.

Contact:
Chris Cartter
Join Together
441 Stuart Street, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: (617) 437-1500
Fax: (617) 437-9394
Email: info@jointogether.org
Internet: http://www.jointogether.org

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety
777 North Capital Street, NE, Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 408-1711
Contact: Katherine Hutt

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety is a nonprofit lobbying organization that specializes in highway safety issues.

Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI)
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009-5728
(202) 332-9110

CSPI is an independent, nonprofit consumer advocacy group specializing in health issues.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE:

Mad at the Ads - Citizens' Guide to Challenging Alcohol Advertising;
Citizens' Action Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising

Drug-Free Schools and Regional Community Center Programs:

These centers assist schools and communities to develop prevention and early intervention programs to help address the many alcohol- and drug-related problems facing today's youth.

The programs will end in March 1996.

Northeast Regional Center
12 Overton Avenue
Sayville, NY 11782
(516) 589-7022

Southeast Regional Center
Spencerian Office Plaza
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
(502) 588-0052

Midwest Regional Center
1900 Spring Road
Oak Brook, IL 60521
(708) 571-4710

Southwest Regional Center
The University of Oklahoma
555 Constitution, Suite 138
Norman, OK 73037-0005
(800) 234-7972

Western Regional Center
101 SW Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 275-9480

Drug Prevention Programs in Higher Education
Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE)
Office of Post-Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-3331
(202) 708-5750

CONTACT: **Richard Wheeler**

FIPSE runs grant programs to support and promote substance abuse prevention programs on campuses across the nation. Money is available to institutions of higher learning to develop pro-active prevention approaches and strategies.

Marin Institute for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems
24 Belvedere Street
San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 456-5692

The Institute develops, implements and disseminates innovative approaches to prevention, focusing on environments that support and glamorize alcohol and illegal drug use.

PUBLICATION AVAILABLE:

Progress Report: Alcohol Consumption on Campus.

Media Resource Center on Alcohol Issues
Institute for Health Advocacy
7227 Broadway #305
Lemon Grove, CA 91945-1505
(619) 460-8523

The Media Resource Center on Alcohol Issues provides training and technical assistance on the use of the media to increase public awareness of alcohol-related problems and potential policy solutions. Offers "Meet the Media" training seminars as well as *Action Alerts* on the hottest local and national policy issues.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
(301) 468-2600 or (800) 729-6686

NCADI is the information service for the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Extensive resources, including information on the Teen Drinking Prevention Program (CSAP), bibliographies, free computer searches, treatment referral, alcohol and drug education materials, new service, prevention and education resources. Also works with the Regional Alcohol and Drug Awareness Resource Network (RADAR). Publishes *Alcohol Health and Research World*, *Prevention Pipeline*, and the *Special Reports to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health*.

National Conference of State Legislatures
444 North Capitol Street, Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 624-5400

The National Council of State Legislatures offers model legislation to help coalitions draft their own legislation.

National Families in Action
2296 Henderson Mill Road, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30345
(404) 934-6364

National Families in Action runs the National Drug Information Center, a resource center and clearinghouse, and publishes a newsletter, *Drug Abuse Update*.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
400 Seventh Street, SW, Room 5130
(NTS-21)
Washington, D.C. 20590
(202) 366-2724

NHTSA provides technical assistance and resources to help coalitions distribute information about highway safety programs.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE:

Shifting into Action: Youth and Highway Safety, DOT HS 806 798. Lists programs for various groups in the community such as parent groups, as well as information sources.

The Zero Tolerance Resource Kit, which includes the latest legislation on zero tolerance laws, as well as an evaluation component.

To order publications, call (800) 553-6847

Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD)
P.O. Box 800
Marlboro, MA 01752
(508) 481-3568

SADD provides students with prevention and intervention strategies to help them deal with the issues of underage drinking, impaired driving, and substance abuse

Publications

Health and Behavioral Health consequences of Binge Drinking in College, by Henry Wechsler et. al.

AVAILABLE FROM:

Harvard School of Public Health
677 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
(617) 432-1137

or: Journal of the American Medical Association, 272(21):1672-1677, 1994

Communities Take Charge!: A Manual for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems among Youth

AVAILABLE FROM:

University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
675 Hoes Lane, Room N110
Piscataway, NJ 08854-5635
(908) 235-5041

Monitoring the Future Survey, National High School Senior Drug Abuse Survey

AVAILABLE FROM:

Dr. Lloyd Johnston
University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research
412 Maynard
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1399
(313) 763-5043

Reducing Underage Drinking and Its Consequences, by Michael Klitzner, Deborah Fisher, and Kathryn Stewart

Substance Abuse: Early Intervention for Adolescents, by Michael Klitzner, Deborah Fisher, Kathryn Stewart and Stefanie Gilbert

AVAILABLE FROM:

Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation
4315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1300W
Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 469-2907

The Impact of Alcohol Advertising and the Use of Alcohol in Television Programs and Films on Underage Drinking, A Report by the Prevention Committee of Governor William Donald Schaefer's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission

AVAILABLE FROM:

Governor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission
300 East Joppa Road, Suite 1105
Towson, MD 21286
(410) 321-3521

Too Young to Buy and Too Young to Sell - A Case for Raising the Age of Alcohol Sellers, by Linda Cherry, John de Miranda, Gretchen Gundrum and Kay Hursh

AVAILABLE FROM:

Horizon Services, Inc.
2595 Depot Road
Hayward, CA 94545
(510) 785-7142

The Office of the Inspector General conducted a major survey of underage drinking and issued the following reports:

Youth and Alcohol: A National Survey. Drinking Habits, Access, Attitudes and Knowledge, OEI-09-91-00652

Youth and Alcohol: A National Survey. Do They Know What They're Drinking? OEI-09-91-00653

Youth and Alcohol: Laws and Enforcement. Is the 21-Year-Old Drinking Age a Myth? OEI-09-91-00654
This report is also available from NCADI at (800) 729-6686. #RP0799.

AVAILABLE FROM:

Office of the Inspector General
50 United Nations Plaza
Room 161
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 556-6830
Contact: Kaye Kidwell

Join Together is a national resource helping communities fight substance abuse.

Its program components include:

- **Technical Assistance** to help community groups develop comprehensive strategies against alcohol and drugs and the related problems that result.
- **Public Policy Panels** to help communities identify and overcome policy barriers that hamper their success.
- **National Leadership Fellows Program** to bring together outstanding leaders fighting substance abuse problems across the country and provide them with recognition and training to enhance their efforts.
- **Join Together Online** to link people across the country electronically to share strategies and ideas and to help them access the latest findings in the substance abuse field.
- **Communications** to help community groups raise public awareness about substance abuse problems and solutions.
- **National Surveys** to describe community coalitions and to assess their contributions and their needs.

Join Together is primarily funded by a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to the Boston University School of Public Health.

JOIN TOGETHER
A NATIONAL RESOURCE FOR COMMUNITIES FIGHTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Join Together
441 Stuart Street, 6th Floor
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Tel: (617) 437-1500
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Internet: http://www.jointogether.org

JOIN TOGETHER

A NATIONAL RESOURCE FOR COMMUNITIES FIGHTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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